

SEVEN DAYS

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PAGE 40

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THE MEN WHO WOULD BE MAYOR

BY ALEXA FREIZE, PAGE 30



WHAT A BALL: 20 YEARS OF DRAG

BY KEN PICARD, PAGE 34

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incidents there. Certainly a first step in the legislation process would be to free most if not all of these people, and engage their criminal records so their futures are not handcuffed unnecessarily.

On the other hand, if legislation becomes a reality, I hope it includes very strict penalties for driving "under the influence" and for possession and use by minors. Life, man, I am ambivalent on the issue. Criminalization of marijuana use is a tragedy for the individual and an unnecessary cost to taxpayers. On the other hand, Vermont does not need more "stupid" — an undeniable element of the pet-induced mental state.

KATE GOODWIN
SOUTH HERO

FIX IT FIRST

Recently, *Seven Days* ran an article on the UVM Medical Center ("Single Provider").



January 31] The same charge cut the hospital \$67 million. What? Our local billion-dollar medical monolith now wants to spend a measly \$60 million on a necessary addition that would provide single rooms for patients. They also want to purchase more land and buildings in South Burlington for future development. Hm?

If UVMHC was truly interested in serving the community, it would begin by providing comprehensive emergency room service. I've heard numerous complaints over the years. Around Christmas, an 84-year-old friend of mine was in the ER and couldn't stop throwing up. She had to wait four hours to receive any care, while others were seen who weren't in need of immediate care.

Another friend was basically escorted out of the ER into 96-degree heat when she complained that she had been waiting for three hours. They and her name had been called and since there was no response, she had been moved to the bottom of the list. Obviously she did not hear the call. How come? What's the protocol she was delirious when I went to pick her up?

In America's First PR, Stephenie Bell explains why "health care is falling apart" and hospitals are a big part of the problem. Hospitals, including UVMHC,

offer services at prices that are little relation to costs. Heart bypass surgery costs \$9,119 in Argentina and an average of \$67,583 in the U.S. Perhaps that's why medical bills are the biggest cause of bankruptcies in the U.S.

By the way, UVMHC, which calls itself a nonprofit, made an average 8 percent more than other comparable hospitals in the country. That's a lot of gel.

Tom Krupp
S. BURLINGTON

HOMING INSTINCT

Thanks for the mention of both our Warren home ("Passive House: Down the Ultra-Efficient Home Path the Way to Carbon Neutrality in Vermont?" January 7) and the *New York Times* article about us titled "Exhausted by a House That Sucks Energy?" Really? Yes, our house is big — to accommodate our three married kids and six grandkids, who visit often. Yes, sustainability is our goal. Exhausted? No way! This place keeps on engaged and constantly learning. Fine, moved from a long career in the construction industry, built our house in itself with *Seven Days* willing help. We're creative problem solvers and enjoy our challenges.

We'd do a number of things differently if we had it to do over, but now we have a house that is close to net-zero in energy consumption and production. Nk Petro and Li Tang Shih ("Energizing: Saving Energy Costs and the Environment — in a 1920s House in

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1 THURSDAY 12 ON TAP

Bottoms up! Beer lovers explore the darker side of suds at **BEER AFTERDARK: FETTERWARY**, where 20 breweries serve up samples of dark brews. Rounding out the sipping session: Adams Krakowski, Dwight Matthews, and Anne Whyte discuss the history, chemistry and brewing processes behind the malt beverage.

SEE CALSCHEDULE LISTING ON PAGE 52

2 ONGOING Game Changer

In 1993, Pablo Picasso painted *Tun Comptendu*, a controversial portrayal of female prostitutes that set the stage for culture wars. An unlikely rock on the art world, African American and European artists explore the passion behind the painting in *"Gauguin, Rock, The Creation and Legacy of Picasso's Comptendu of Angew."*

SEE BEER ON PAGE 18



3 WEDNESDAY 18 Laugh a Minute

People go to an office at **Comic Relief: A Benefit for COTS**. Canadian comedian Koko Roach has this annual fundraiser for Burlington Children's Hospital. She'll be helping with a hilarious evening of the comic's famous talks. Top her: they drink out jokes in support of Vermont's largest charitable care organization.

SEE CALSCHEDULE LISTING ON PAGE 50

4 FRIDAY 18-SUNDAY 19 Snowed In

Winter is for snow, and the artists at the **Vermont Heavy Woodstock Snow Sculpture Festival** couldn't be happier. With fresh powder covering the ground, artists have ideas for Original Unleashed: the white stuff into stunning works of art over three days.

SEE CALSCHEDULE LISTING ON PAGE 50

5 THURSDAY 12 Dreaming Big

The *Reverend* women featured in the award-winning documentary *Sweet Dreams* know a thing or two about seeing a vision through to the end. And instead to this issue, the country's first province. They turn to find out how dreaming, cultivating, and then, without releasing a host, open on an on-screen shop.

SEE CALSCHEDULE LISTING ON PAGE 50

6 WEDNESDAY 18 In Harmony

Every year, Austin, Texas, draws top musical talents to the South by Southwest (SXSW) Music Festival. This March, *Wavelength* is the Dufford Brothers, Lowell Thompson, and the Circle, and a large number of new and local acts. The festival is also a great place to see some of the best music in the world.

SEE CALSCHEDULE LISTING ON PAGE 51

7 THURSDAY 12 String's the Thing

According to *PopMatters*, *Yee-Ha* is the most intense of the band's songs of top notch bluegrass music. In 2012, the North Carolina quartet released *Band of the Year*. The album was a success, and it took much time through the music. The group's hard-picking banjoists light up the stage at the *Bluegrass* festival in Burlington.

SEE SPOTLIGHT ON PAGE 10

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Vaccine-Nation

As a measles outbreak continued to spread from California to 16 other states last week, an outbreak of vaccination debate infected U.S. politics.

Vermont was hardly immune. In an interview with Vermont Public Radio's **ALAN HARRIS** last Tuesday, Vermont Department of Health Commissioner **WALTER DOBBS** warned that measles is "only one plane ride or one car ride away." Noting that in a handful of Vermont schools only 20 to 40 percent of students are fully immunized from measles, mumps and rubella, Chen said an outbreak could "absolutely" happen here.

"In some of these schools, you could have an outbreak very easily, and it could get very big, very quickly," he said.

That's why Chen, a former emergency room doctor and state representative, has long believed that Vermont should do away with its so-called "philosophical exemption," which allows parents to keep their unvaccinated children in school.

"My position has always been fairly clear: I don't think that vaccination is the safest thing you can do for your children and that it's our responsibility to ensure that all kids in school — especially those that can't be vaccinated — are protected," he told *Rattle*. "So I'm not in favor of the philosophical exemption."

Chen's boss, Gov. **PETER DINKINS**, 100% it.

At a press conference in Burlington the next day, Shanahan echoed many of Chen's points and urged parents to, "Do the right thing: Vaccinate your kids. They work."

But he also defended a compromise he helped strike in May 2013, the last time the vaccination debate swept through Vermont. After the Senate voted 24 to 4 in favor of lifting the exemption, anti-vaccination activists stormed the Statehouse and convinced the House to reverse the bill.

In the end, lawmakers signed off on a compromise allowing parents with "religious or philosophical convictions opposed to immunization" to continue to skip vaccinating their children, so long as they signed a statement saying they understood the risks to their kids and others. The bill also called on Chen's department to collect and publish each school's vaccination rate.

At Wednesday's presser, Shanahan called the law an "elegant" way to strike a "balance" between opposing beliefs. Asked whether he would prefer to "leave it alone," the gov answered in the affirmative.

An **VIR** news release noted in a story that aired last Wednesday that Chen's argument increased one articulated two days

earlier by New Jersey Gov. **CHRIS CHRISTIE**, who's expected to run for president in the Republican primary.

Chenise said vaccinations are "an important part" of protecting children's health, adding, "I also understand that parents need to have some measure of choice in things as well, so that's the balance the government has to strike."

Said Shanahan, "We have to find the balance between what we believe and individual liberties."

The gov's head spin master, deputy chief of staff **SCOTT CORNELL**, didn't like the comparison. He took to Twitter that night to publicly shame Dobbs, writing, "@GovPeterShanahan did not question the science & did NOT try to get vaccinated."

I'M TURN.

VERMONT HEALTH COMMISSIONER
HARRY CHEN

Later, Cornell accused Dobbs over Twitter of "shoddy journalism" and "trying for a headline & that's why you mention chicken." His selective reporting was mostly of gibberish.

Cornell is right that he has never questioned the science of vaccines, but Dobbs never said he did. Asked via email what, precisely, **VIR** got wrong, Cornell suddenly sounded up and declared to *my* editor, Dobbs' boss, **VIR** news director **JENNIFER WILKINSON**, defended his reporter, calling the story "like accurate and very timely."

The next day, Sen. **KEVIN MURPHY** (D-Union) held a Senatehouse press conference to announce that he would again seek to ditch Vermont's philosophical exemption.

"We're going in the wrong direction," Medina and later "It's time for people to realize that they're not just making a decision for themselves, because if their child becomes sick, their child may well suffer. But it might be their best friend's baby who dies."

By the time Medina held his press conference, Shanahan appeared to have turned in Chen.

In a written statement released soon after, the rogue commissioner said that while vaccinations are "the most important action you can take" to protect your child, "We are not convinced that removing the philosophical exemption will contribute to improved childhood immunization rates."

Wait, what? Was this the same **RH** doc who just days earlier told **VIR** he opposed the exemption?

"I'm torn." Chen explained in a phone interview. "Right? I mean, it's clear that this is not an easy decision to come to. In 2013, I certainly supported removing the exemption, and if you could just snap your fingers and have it done, it would probably, from a pure public health perspective, make sense."

But after discussions with his staff, Chen said he had come to the conclusion that another "constitutional protection debate" would only give voice to those who fairly claim that vaccinations do more harm than good.

"The science of vaccines is really clear, in terms of being effective and being safe," he said. "The science of how you get people vaccinated is a little different, and I'm not sure the science says removing the exemption will actually be successful."

Medina doesn't think much of that argument.

"The whole country is having this debate right now," the *Rattle*'s Stephens said. "The commissioner and the governor can put their heads in the sand and not participate in a national debate, but the debate's here."

Chen may have a point. In a recent study published by **SARAH HANSHALL HUMPHREY** and **SARAH COLVILLE**, which they wrote about this week in the *Washington Post*, the social science professors found that "the more news media devote[s] attention to the political controversy, the less the public support[s] vaccination."

When? As for Chen's prescription and public medicine, was the good doctor taking a little too much public health advice from the governor, who wasn't exactly trained in the field?

It would be silly not to know what his boss' position is." Chen said, adding that he believes Shanahan's views on vaccines may be moving closer to his own.

It wouldn't be the first time Shanahan found himself at odds with his Department of Health. Chen has asked for stronger regulation of tobacco products and toxic chemicals and against legislating marriage — positions not exactly in keeping with Shanahan's.

"That's one of the toughest things about this job," Chen said. "That's a calculation you have to make all the time. But I have to say, I always feel free to stand with what the science says."

So what does the data collected by the Department of Health say about how well Vermont's philosophical exemption is working?

A year after Vermont passed its last law about the practice, the number of fully vaccinated children entering kindergarten

dropped by slightly more than 1 percent — from 86.9 percent to 85.8 percent. While only 14 of the 6,771 students on that grade sought a medical exemption and 1 a religious exemption, 399 students requested a philosophical exemption.

Last Friday was, **annoying** of the Vermont Press Bureau asked Shandari about the growing number of unvaccinated children in Vermont. The governor passed and said, "I just am not that familiar with the numbers from the last 12 months."

So it seems.

Dept. of No Ovation

Sitting in his office on the second floor of the Statehouse, House Speaker **WARREN** (D-Morrisville) opened recently that the \$10 million budget gap facing the legislature is "readily being glossed over."

"We seem to sort of hunk away at current programs and not necessarily put any 'You know what, we're not going to do this anymore,'" he said. "I guess the question is, well, you know, at \$10 million, is there something you just say we're not going to do anymore? I think it's worth putting something like that on the table, to show people what would that mean?"

What programs or department would Shandari recommend cutting?

"I'll get back to you in the next 10 days," he said with a laugh. "How's that?"

But two minutes later, Shandari had already come up with an answer.

"I'll tell you one right now is the Department of Information and Innovation doing what it should do? And do we really need to have it?" he said. "We could outsource it to Vermont firms. There are plenty of IT firms in Vermont."

A week later, Senate President **Ben Allen** (D-Windham) answered the question in much the same way.

"If I had to look at one area I'd consider, it would certainly be DII," he said, arguing that the department had created a "feel-good" and was widely seen as "obstructionist."

"I have not heard one person speak well of DII and the people they have to deal with. It's just like they've gone out of their way trying to be nasty," Campbell said. "What it comes down to is I think DII has to be kept under a microscope."

What if DII? Essentially, the state's in-house information technology department. Created in 2008 to combine IT services, DII's 125 employees handle everything from internet connectivity to major software projects. Its annual budget, currently \$18.5 million, is slated to grow more than 40 percent next year to \$26.2 million, if the legislature adopts Shandari's recommendations.

"We're happy to be put under a microscope," says DII Commissioner **ROBERT BIRN**, the state's chief information officer. "I have not received any specific

POLITICS

complaints from department heads or legislators."

According to Birn, DII has actually managed to cut the costs of many basic services it provides to other departments and agencies by negotiating network contracts and controlling Microsoft licensing. The reason for the budget increase, he says, is that other branches of state government have requested expensive systems upgrades.

Rep. **SAULYAMA** (D-Glover), who makes a living as a web developer, says the government's never any good at coping with technology.

"The technology is always moving so fast, and the bureaucracy is moving so slow," he says. "This is the Department of Information and Innovation, but so they really keeping pace with innovation? I don't think so."

Birn disagrees.

"I'm very proud of what DII delivers and the efficiencies we've brought to state government," he says. "I think we've got a positive story to tell."

Time to start telling it.

Media Notes

Longtime Burlington Free Press reporter ROBERT WILSH is leaving the paper at the end of the month to join Seven Dups.

Wilsh has worked at the *Freeps* since 1992, when the USA Today reporter volunteered to take part in Governor's employee-leader program — and fell in love with Burlington. Since then, she says she's "worked in every department at the *Free Press* except sports." Wilsh is currently covering Chittenden County and Burlington's regional race.

"I've worked with some great people, and I certainly miss my colleagues," Wilsh says. "There's been a lot of change. I think some of the changes are for the better and some are questionable. Time will tell which work out. I certainly hope the *Free Press* succeeds."

According to *Seven Dups* publisher and co-owner **PAULA MULLER**, Wilsh will join staff writer **ANDREW FARRER** in covering Burlington and the rest of Chittenden County. Her hiring, which takes effect March 9, follows that of former *Freeps* reporters **KEVIN KALLAMER** and **HEATHER ANDERSON**, who now cover the *Statehouse* for *Seven Dups*.

Usually a former *Freeps* reporter herself, she's known Wilsh since they worked side by side at the paper in 1992 and 1993.

"Molly will give us the editorial firepower to write about the city the way we have always wanted," Ready says. "She is a versatile and productive reporter and a natural storyteller — just the kind of writer who can spread her wings and thrive at *Seven Dups*." ☐

Duchene, Paul Heston's partner, Shyla Longmont, is an analyst of the Vermont Department of Health.

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Taking the Bait: Irasburg Couple Charged in 'Elaborate' Poaching Case

BY MARK DIAMOND

Fifteen deer mounts decorated one side of Wayne Dixon's living room, arranged in three neat rows of five. On the opposite wall two deer rifles hung within arm's reach. In the kitchen, a master food cabinet of coyotes, a bear and furbars, along with glowing pictures of Dixon posed with various kills. At least 50 sets of antlers formed a row midway up the wall, like wallpaper border.

"For somebody who loves to hunt?" Dixon, 66, explained on a quick tour of his Irasburg home.

He's also somebody who loves to poach, according to the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department. It started investigating Dixon and his wife, Jeanne, several years ago before arresting them last November for allegedly running what the department called an "elaborate deer-poaching operation" that is among the largest it has ever uncovered.

While searching their home, game wardens found more than 300 deer mounts, seven hunters full of apples and corn, which can be used for animal bait, and a shooting port in the bedroom that opened onto a field frequented by live spotlights.

The poaching "was so significant, according to wardens, that it almost defrauded the ecosystem," Warden says they found roughly 60 trails that indicated the animals were traveling from all directions to the Dixon's 100-acre property, attracted by piles of their favorite foods. Hunters in snow surrounding Irasburg reported difficulty in finding deer.

"That's just not natural deer activity. They were born and didn't know anything else other than apples that were free and easy to get year-round," Fish & Wildlife Lt. Jason Betschler said. "Deer take lots of time for miles around. [The Dions] wanted to shoot big deer every year, and this is how they did it."

Wayne Dixon faces nine misdemeanor charges of illegally hunting and shooting animals. Jeanne Dixon, 61, faces a misdemeanor charge of possessing an illegal deer. Each charge carries a potential 60-day jail sentence, fine and revocation of one's hunting license.

In a recent interview at his home, Wayne Dixon greeted a reporter warmly. Bald and broad shouldered, the Irasburg native proudly showed off his well-manicured antelope horns full of pictures and newspaper articles about his wife, a first-time Vermont Democratic Derby champion and successful race car driver.

Though he declined to discuss the criminal case in any detail, Dixon said that he expects to be concerned. The Dixon's attorney, Kyle Hart, also declined to comment.



PHOTO BY THE IRASBURG PRESS

"It hurts my feelings," Dixon said. "It's like, 'I'm going to have a heart attack, it hurts that much I appreciate deer!'"

To prove his point, Dixon gestured across the road to a field where six coyotes dangled from a wire suspended between a tree and a telephone pole, their lifelines scraping the snow. Coyotes can be hunted at any time of year in any number, in Vermont. Dixon and his wife between 30 and 60 coyotes every year, hanging them in his property with animal carcasses.

"If I hear the coyotes out. It's saying at least 15 deer or more a year," Dixon said. "Fish & Wildlife won't shoot that."

Game wardens maintain that coyotes rarely hunt deer and survive on a diet of mostly berries and small rodents. "The majority of coyotes in Vermont do not

rely on deer as their main food source," Betschler said.

Vermont has 65,000 licensed hunters who legally kill around 16,000 deer every year during designated seasons. Rifle season, the most popular of them, spans two weeks to end to late November but, during which time hunters are allowed to shoot one buck. Baiting deer with apples or other food is forbidden in any season, so is shooting deer at night, because the animals freeze in a spotlight. To be legally hunted, deer must also be at a certain size.

Fish & Wildlife has never estimated how many deer are killed illegally but, due to legal and logistical barriers, only a handful of poachers are prosecuted annually. The department has 40 game wardens responsible for patrolling anywhere from 10

to 10 communities each. Wardens enforce fishing and hunting rules and respond to 4,000 complaints a year, which leaves little time for criminal investigations.

"We don't have enough wardens in the state of Vermont," said Ed Galla, a veteran hunter and board member of Hunters, Anglers and Trappers of Vermont. "They have way more ground to cover than they possibly can. The poachers know it. There are a lot of places you can go and know you're not being watched."

Besides the lack of wardens, there are other hurdles in prosecuting poachers. Especially in smaller towns, people are reluctant to come forward with poaching tips, the department says. Further, it can take years to gather enough evidence to prove a case. Usually there are no eyewitnesses. And once a deer is dead, it is nearly impossible to prove that it was killed illegally.

"It's hard to make an airtight case on these things," Galla and "They're almost got to have videotape evidence of somebody doing it. I sympathize with them."

The Dions pleaded not guilty in Orleans Superior Court last month and a trial has not yet been scheduled. Citing the ongoing criminal case, the department declined to answer questions about some aspects of the investigation. But officials did discuss their decision to focus on the Dions, and court documents provide additional details.

A now-refuted version first appeared a case against the Dixon 19 years ago, but never filed charges, and Major Dennis Blankenship, chief of law enforcement at the Fish & Wildlife Department. Then, in 2001, several members of the public came forward with tips that the couple was baiting deer. The department launched another investigation, but after three years, no charges. Wardens had tried to gather evidence against the Dions, Betschler said.

In 2003 and 2004, wardens noticed alarming deer behavior during trips to Irasburg. The deer would stroll close to the Dixon's home, unafraid of humans. According to Betschler, wardens found deer trails that led to the house and heard reports that other local hunters, unable to find deer, had also started baiting.

"It was a lot of word of mouth — the public is what drove it first," Betschler said. And since we started making the effort it was having an impact on more people. It didn't take us a month to get a better idea than, where were things being affected so dramatically. It was evident that this was something that we needed to devote a serious amount of work to."

Wardens also noticed that the Dions seemed to be the luckiest hunter in Vermont. Even the best, most expensive



PHOTO BY THE IRASBURG PRESS

hunters sometimes emerge from the woods empty-handed or with a smaller deer. "Everybody has bad years," Gollo said. "There's a lot of back involved in deer hunting, no matter how good you are." Yet your other year, Ratchelder said, the Diems would both bring massive deer to the local weighing station and would often send pictures of themselves posing with their prized kills to the *Benton Chronicle*.

It's easier to prove that someone killed a deer out of season than to show they illegally baited during hunting season. And court documents show that wardens were determined to catch the Diems during the former.

Wardens stalked out the home several times in early November. They returned secretly on the evening of November 34, the night before opening day of hunting season. Around 5:30 p.m., Senior Warden Jason Dukens heard a single gunshot come from the Diem's Young Road home and saw a man walk outside with a flashlight in his hand, searching a nearby field.

Warden Jason Beal said Ratchelder picked up the case before them but heard no shots from the Diem house. They were parked at the end of Young Road at 8:00 a.m. when Diem, driving away from home, stopped and told them that he had just shot a nine-point buck that morning. Wardens saw blood on his hands.

Because the wardens had heard a shot the night before — and none that morning — they were able to convince a judge to give them a search warrant for the Diem's home and property. They found an ATV, rifle, straws with blood and littered with deer hair, that ran down the house to an area of melted snow where wardens concluded the deer had died.

In the Diem's basement, an unopened nine-point buck hung from the rafters, its remains dumped in a five-gallon bucket, evidence says. Warden took temperature readings from the deer's thigh and deduced that it had been dead long before that morning.

In the Diem's bedroom, wardens observed a large bay window above the bed, surrounded by a nearby table, a small sleeping port that opened to the outdoors and a pet rock similar to those found at shooting ranges. Two light switches near the table controlled five outdoor floodlights.

Diem told wardens that he had shot the deer from this perch, but insisted it had happened that morning, during hunting season. His wife and that was in bed but

didn't hear the rifle shot — an implausible claim, wardens said in court documents.

Diem was also charged with shooting a blue Jay that wardens found dead in the field. According to affidavits, Diem told them he shot the legally protected bird after it ate corn from his bird feeder.

It's rare that poaching cases get to trial or result in prison time. Defendants usually pay fines and surrender their hunting licenses under terms of plea agreements. Ratchelder said that the department merely hopes the Diems are convicted, and declined to say whether he thought imprisonment was appropriate.

But poaching cases tend to inspire writers who play by the rules, and many view the crimes as such. "When you go outside the law, you're stealing from people who follow the rules," Gollo said. "The whole sport of hunting centers around the fact that there are rules to the game and you follow the rules like everybody else, or you're an outlier."

The Diem's arrests generated a brief flurry of statewide publicity but the attention is shifting now. Local papers have repeatedly documented Wayne Diem's long-running battle against coyotes. A 2002 story in the *Newport Daily Express* described Diem strategically placing animal carcasses in his field, grabbing his rifle, whistling, quietly when the coyotes approached to get them to freeze — and then firing away.

In the stories, which Diem clipped and saved in a scrapbook, Diem challenged game wardens. "It wasn't long ago that the Fish & Wildlife people thought these coyotes weren't a problem," Diem told the *Express*. "But since I have been shooting them, I'm seeing more dogs with fumes and an increase in birds around here — so I think they have been wrong about a lot of things over the years."

Also saved in a scrapbook was a letter to the editor of another local paper in which Diem explained his tactics and pledged to continue what he sees as the fight to protect deer.

"The coyotes will keep on coming, and so long as they do I will keep on shooting them," he wrote.

Accompanying the letter was a picture of Diem posing with 30 dead coyotes hanging in his field. He stood tall, with his shoulders back, a rifle in his hands and a slight smile across his face.

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Vermont Considers Redefining 'Local' Schools

BY TERRI HALLENBECK

Four days a week Andrew Pond does a sport coat and drives 30 miles from his home in Bolton to the Statehouse in Montpelier. Pond has been on strike from his job as a service representative at Burlington Communications since last October. He spent time on the picket line, caught up on errands and then decided he needed "some structure."

As a Bolton school board member and father of two, 45-year-old Pond decided that the best way to spend his idle time was to follow the debate over the future of Vermont's schools. He spends most weekdays sitting on a padded bench in the House Education Committee's cramped meeting room on the second floor of the Statehouse.

For the past few years, Pond's town has been confronting the very issue the legislature is now debating: What can governments do to slow rising property taxes in enrollment in Vermont's schools continues to shrink?

In November, Bolton answered that question by merging into a school district with nearby Richmond, Jericho and Underhill.

Now the legislature is pondering whether to hire, merge or mandate communities across the state to do the same. The debate will force Vermonters from Inlandville to Waterbury to consider whether they can afford to stay small.

Last Thursday, House Education Committee chair Dave Sharpe unveiled draft legislation that would merge Vermont's 277 school districts into far fewer, larger districts.

The bill gives districts until 2008 to reconfigure themselves and meet education standards, but insists that they would be forced to consolidate. Small school grants and "phantom student" subsidies that have been a lifeline for the most rural Vermont communities would be eliminated, according to the bill.

With rising property taxes hanging overhead, Vermont could combine the urge of changing the definition of "local" schools.

Reimagining 'Local'

Consideration makes sense to Pond. When his son started at Burke Mountain School in 2004, the school had a total of 35 kindergarten students. Last year and the year before, the fourth grade at Burke had just six students, Pond said.

As Bolton's enrollment shrank, and just last year, residents rejected the budget and the school board was forced to make deep cuts.

Last November, four of the five voters that make up the Chittenden State Supervisory Union — including Bolton — voted to dissolve their elementary school boards and



Bolton school board member Andrew Pond meeting with House Education Committee chair Dave Sharpe in Montpelier.

merge into a single district, which would be governed by one 15-member board. Pond is a member of that new board.

"I have a much higher degree of confidence that, in part of this larger district, Bolton will retain a better quality of education than they might have," Pond said. Not everybody has such confidence.

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HOUSE SPEAKER SHARPE SMITH
(D-MONTPELIER)

A fifth voter in the union, Huntington, rejected the merger and decided to remain its local elementary school board.

Last week, several Huntington residents traveled to Montpelier to offer the House Education Committee a different perspective. They argued there was no evidence that merging would save money or improve education. Rather, they said, Huntington would lose local control of the town's Inverness Private Montpelier School.

"I don't believe we should change the definition of what a community is," said Gail Conley, a retired school superintendent who lives in Huntington.

Other small-school supporters were so fearful that their voices were being drowned out that they formed an advocacy group, hired Montpelier lobbying firm

Action Circles and are trying to make the case that smaller can be better.

"There are some strong motives to small schools," said Glen Torney, a member of the group that calls itself Vermonters for Schools and Communities. He's a school board member in Cabot, which operates a prekindergarten-12 school with roughly 300 students.

Students there are heavily involved in extracurricular activities, have strong test scores and little advanced-placement course at a higher-than-average rate, he said.

Cabot has only one science teacher. Torney told the Senate Education Committee last week. That's good, he argued. In a small school, students and teachers get to know each other well.

Committee chair Ann Cummings (D-Washington) came to the opposite conclusion. "I got concerned if there's only one science teacher in a school," she said later. "I think it's somewhat idealistic to say every kid is going to do well under one teacher."

The Cost of Small

The debate over school consolidation is hardly new in Vermont. Last week in the Senate committee discussed the issue. Sen. Bill Doyle (R-Washington) pulled out a 1988 report he authored on the topic. The state had 283 school districts then. It now has 177.

The debate was reintroduced last March when 35 school districts voted down proposed budgets. In November, voters appeared to want their frustrations over rising property taxes by opposing Democratic legislators and Gov. Peter

Shumlin. The former lost seats in the House and Senate, while the latter nearly lost reelection.

"I was one of those people who knocked on doors and heard about 'property taxes,'" said Sharpe, whose Democratic district-mate, Mike Fisher, was defeated by Republican Fred Bauer. "We have to do a better job. We can't just spend more money."

The House and Senate are working together on the topic in a way that eluded them in previous years. "That's what happens when you have an election that sends such a big surprise as the last one," said Senate Majority Leader Philip Scarth (D-Chittenden). "There is going to be something major done this year."

"Something major" could include further scaling the cost of education from property taxes to income taxes. Proposals to accomplish that are still emerging.

But lawmakers and the Shumlin administration are focusing much of their attention on whether Vermont can afford so many school districts. It's clear that small schools will increasingly have to prove their worth.

Education Secretary Robert Holcombe has produced data demonstrating the real cost of small. When people say that costs, the impact, they might make different decisions about their future.

Holcombe has asked legislators to phase out small school grants, which go to schools with fewer than 100 students or an average grade size of less than 20. She also hopes to decrease so-called "phantom student" subsidies, which protect schools from a decrease in funding should enrollment dip by more than 3.5 percent. By counting "phantom students," schools effectively pad their enrollment in order to retain funding.

Holcombe has also proposed requiring schools to meet standards that take into consideration per-pupil spending and student-teacher ratios. Small schools with high per-pupil spending that are unable to meet sufficient standards would be particularly targeted, Holcombe said.

If a school doesn't make the grade, Holcombe wants the State Board of Education to intervene and even close those that can't — or want — make improvements. "The reality is a state of us were deciding enrollment. It is the hand we're being dealt," Holcombe said. "We all have to live with it."

The state is paying \$75 million in small school grants this year, for example, received one for \$60,156. The district also received 15-4 phantom students. That may both the grant and the phantom student subsidy, and Cabot's equalized tax rates would rise from \$15.79 to \$18.02 per \$100 of assessed value. That's on a \$250,000



Home Educators Confronted at State House

home could go from \$5,447 to \$4,500 with no adjustment for income.

Sharpe agrees that shoring the real cost of small schools is an eye-opener. The town of Addison opted against merging with neighbors, he noted, but if residents faced a tax rate that reflected the real cost of educating their children, they might have chosen to merge.

"Why are we incentivizing small schools not to do what is best for their students?" Sharpe asked.

Those receiving small school grants see things differently. They consider the grants part of the deal struck when the state adopted Act 60, the 1997 law designed to equalize education across the state, and Vermont School Boards Association executive director Steve Dale. One third of his member boards receive small school grants.

Rep. Heidi Schwammon (R-Bloom) called the elimination of small school grants a "passive aggressive way for the state to close schools."

Tammy said losing the small school grant would force Cabot to make significant cuts. "My concern is that some of the very long strengths of a school like Cabot and other small schools would likely be lost," he said.

Ronan Clark of Middlesex, another member of Vermonters for Schools and Communities, told the House Education Committee that small schools are what make Vermont communities special. "Local is probably the single thing Vermont does best," she said. "There are other states that are desperate for what we take for granted."

In Bolton, Pond said his perspective on "local" changed as his school board looked at its options in recent years. "I began to realize what I thought of as 'we' was changing. We' was no longer Bolton. I began to realize 'we' was Chittenden East," he said.

Under state law, schools in a newly merged district are protected from closure for the first four years. While there are no guarantees after that, Pond and he think the merger creates options rather than elimination. Bello, who is the assistant school in the newly formed district, could become a magnet school or a pre-K-5 school, he said.

House Speaker Ralp Smith (D-Morrisville) said reality dictates that declining enrollments mean school closures are likely — regardless of what the legislature does.

"Schools are going to close in the state of Vermont whether we put some sort of mandatory closure language in there or not," he said. "The question that they're facing now, some of those schools are going to close."

'A Path in Between'

In the last month, legislators have sifted through more than 100 ideas submitted by members of the public about how to improve the state's education system.

"An overwhelming majority of recommendations and testimony on this topic, and a growing sense among legislators, is that we have to look at larger school districts," Sharpe said. "There are probably 50 ways to do that."

The bill is unveiled in committee last week proposes to do so by requiring school districts to come up with their own reorganizations by 2018. Fearing that, if they'd be forced to merge along the lines of the state's current 67 supervisory unions.

Sharpe said that fills somewhere between voluntary consolidation, which most communities ignore, and mandatory consolidation, which sparks many of them.

"We have to find a path in between that allows local input," Sharpe said. Cummings has Senate counterparts, agreed. It's also clear, though, that at some point the state would step in with a hammer.

"I'd like to allow districts some flexibility," Cummings said. "My preference would be to give them some very definite goals we expect them to achieve. If they don't, we may have to step in."

That could be a tough sell.

"It's going to cause a big ruckus," Schwammon said. "I would prefer things be brought back closer to local communities." She proposes a plan that would create 15 regional unions. While those decisions and spending would be controlled locally, so far, her plan has generated little traction.

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For Many Temps in State Jobs, Health Insurance Is Not an Option

BY NANCY REMSEN

Dozens of people bled to enroll residents in health insurance plans through Vermont's online exchange lacked a key benefit for much of last year: health care coverage.

"It is a cruel irony," said Vermont Welfare Center executive director James Haskins.

Even as the legislature wrestles with issues such as mandating sick pay for all workers and trying to get universal health care, a sizable number of the people working for the state receive no benefits.

Vermont employs about 4,600 full-time workers. More than 3,000 additional people work for Vermont in temporary positions without benefits.

State officials used temporary workers to fill critical customer service jobs for Vermont Health Connect, which launched in October 2010. But because the state doesn't extend benefits to temps, those workers were not offered coverage.

After Haskins's organization spearheaded a Health Care Is a Human Right campaign, he heard from several of those temps. "They said that they looked at purchasing health insurance on their own, but found it too expensive." They chose to go without benefits and pay a penalty," he said.

None of those workers wanted to talk to the press for fear of being fired, Haskins said. One confessed to that worry in a phone chat with a reporter, but declined to say anything more.

"When you don't have job security," Haskins said, "how is it possible to advocate for yourself?"

A year ago, temporary slots authorized for Vermont Health Connect totaled more than 400. Positions had been added to the health care eligibility unit of the Vermont Department for Children and Families, based in Essex. With the launch of the federally mandated health insurance exchange, the unit had a new task: to evaluate the eligibility of Vermont Health Connect customers for federal-to credits and state premium subsidies.

Martha Spellman, the state's human resources commissioner, defended the decision to use temps. "It is a little risky creating 103 full-time positions when you don't know what your need is going to be, what the future will be. It is a risky decision," she said. However, the lack of benefits and limited term of the positions made it difficult to attract and retain workers, Spellman acknowledged. The state was never able to fill more than half the slots.

Thanks to a hiring emergency on "position plus" authorized by the legislature last year, DCF was able to convert 103 temporary



cell-center positions into 73 full-time slots — with benefits — in September. The position pool also gave hiring flexibility to a few other state departments. Since summer 101 temporary or contract positions have been converted to full-time slots with benefits.

The position pool build-up the staff in the health eligibility unit just in time for the health insurance exchange's second open-enrollment period, which began in November and wraps up on February 15. The positions in this unit are "limited-term" rather than permanent, which means they are authorized for two to three years, with extensions possible.

"This produced better outcomes for both staff and for the Vermonters they serve," said Lawrence Miller, Gov. Peter Shumlin's senior adviser and chief of health care reform.

The 73 full-time positions cost the state the same amount as the 103 temporary

slots — a condition set by the legislature. Cost is especially important because the federal funding that paid for the operation and maintenance of Vermont Health Connect during its launch year must be replaced with state dollars — \$51 million in the upcoming budget year. And lawmakers are wrestling with a \$90 million gap between projected revenues and spending.

There's another group of people who work for the state but receive no benefits: private contractors.

The 2014 *Workforce Report* shows that the state spent \$92.6 million on 4,414 personal-services contracts issued in the year ending June 30. Those contracts are agreements under which an individual or agency provides a service valued at \$10,000 or more in a year.

Two contract companies are providing critical customer-support services to the state's health insurance programs. Vermont

and the state rely on contractors, it has also challenged how some private employers use them. The Department of Labor has taken legal actions against numerous businesses in claims misclassified workers as independent contractors to avoid paying for their unemployment insurance and workers' compensation insurance.

Lawmakers have wrestled with bills that would change the definition of independent contractors but have been unsuccessful because they have yet to find a way to phase both businesses and the labor department.

The state has contracted call-taking services for its educational health programs for 17 years. The 90 calls answering Vermont Health Connect phone calls all work for the contractor Maximus at a call center based in downtown Burlington. Maximus handled calls for the state prior to the launch of Vermont Health Connect.

Most of the 90 call-takers are full-time Maximus employees, although they may have started as temps because the contractor uses an employment agency to find workers, and Sam Shikan, public relations officer at Vermont Health Connect, Maximus likes them, the call-takers become eligible for the company's health insurance benefits, which includes medical, dental and vision coverage.

The company and workers share the expense, but the Maximus workers don't receive the workers' share of the insurance premiums or one-of-their death benefits they pay. It does note that employees cover the full cost of vision insurance. Maximus spokesperson Jessica Kline declined to comment.

Last summer, the state hired another contractor — OptumBrightline — to help fix the myriad problems at Vermont Health Connect — including a backlog of 16,000 cases in which Vermontans needed notable changes in their insurance. Optum hired temporary workers in North Carolina, Florida and Texas. Their benefits depended on the temp agency that supplied them to Optum, and Christine Farnin, an Optum spokeswoman.

The Optum operations in Texas and Florida closed in late December after much of the backlog had been eliminated, but a small contingent remains in North Carolina.

For most of a decade, governors and lawmakers limited the number of full-time, permanent state workers because politicians saw that as a measure of the size of state government. They didn't want the public to blame them for unbudgeted government growth, and temps and contractors were a way around the cap.



Vermont Gas Pulls Plug on Phase Two of Pipeline

Worland Gas on Tuesday canceled a planned second leg of a controversial natural gas pipeline project that would have extended from Middlebury to Montpelier, N.Y.

The move came after numerous complaints prompted the project's biggest funding source and customer, Enbridge Energy, to pull out of its agreement with Worland Gas, according to Ben Ferris, the latter company's president and chief executive officer.

A new assessment at the project showed that the price tag had increased by more than \$300 million, from \$244 million to \$533 million, according to Ferris. Gas was president, Jim Schiele.

It was the decision to withdraw, Ferris said in an interview Tuesday afternoon. "We tried and could not get to a mutually beneficial outcome."

If spokeswoman Donna Meadows did not respond to a request for comment.

Ferris's opponents, who had argued the project was environmentally risky and that its costs were being underestimated, heralded the decision as "a success." And Mary Martin at Cornwell, whose firm was on the ground pipeline parts, "The fact they're going to do a complete audit is a party."

The change will affect phases one of the project, a 40-mile stretch under construction from Cornwell to Middlebury. Ferris said that opponents said "the steps we've taken to give them involved don't go to the ground line."

Gov. Peter Shumlin, Vermont Department of Public Service, had backed the project, despite opposition to the decision. "Based on the new projections, I am convinced that we cannot go to the next phase," Shumlin said at a press conference. Still, he added, it is too late to be affordable.

The canceled portion of the project would have connected the pipeline to the state's gas grid and a 100-mile stretch of the pipeline.

Phase one has also seen dramatic cost increases, which have prompted the Vermont Public Service Board to review whether it should put the project through a series of public good.

The second leg of the project would have allowed Vermont Gas to more quickly connect natural gas to natural gas, a gas that has been available previously. "We're not going to have a gas pipeline in Vermont," Ferris said.

We will now focus our efforts on completing phase one of our expansion plan to serve customers in the state's Middlebury and Montpelier areas, according to Ferris. "We're not going to have a gas pipeline in Vermont," Ferris said.

"The customers will not see a significant impact," Ferris said. "We're not going to have a gas pipeline in Vermont," Ferris said.

Worland Gas previously declared that the cost at phase one had increased from \$100 million to \$150 million, but company officials said they still consider the project viable.

"We see planning for the project as a success," Ferris said. "We will not decide in the coming weeks whether the company will be allowed to do that."

Martinez said opponents want, stop working to prevent it, "We don't know what to do."

Paul Ferris, executive director of the Vermont Public Interest Research Group, which opposes the pipeline, acknowledged it would be an "unfortunate" decision to either Vermont Gas or the PIRB. "But," he said, "I think it's a very real possibility."

A coalition of organizations including Zogby Power, the Vermont and 300 Vermont residents called Tuesday to cancel the entire project.

TERRI HALLENBECK

At Lobbyist Fundraiser, Republicans Support Banning Lobbyist Fundraisers



Last Wednesday 40 lobbyists, lawmakers and former legislators gathered in Montpelier at a Republican fundraiser sponsored by lobbyist telecommunications industry group, lobbyist telecommunications and their clients, including several lobbyists, to discuss the Capitol Hill.

The event was hosted by the Senate Mountain Republican Senate Committee, which raised money to finance the political campaign of its members, but Senate Minority Leader Sen. Benning (R-Vermont) and his colleagues and they were mostly invited guests and paid no fee to participate.

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Benning had a list of corporate sponsors to thank when he went to the podium to introduce himself and House Minority Leader Ben Hurley (R-Vermont). But, raising a reporter in the room he opened his mouth.

I would normally at the point in time introduce all the folks that have brought this dinner and drink occasion to us, but all you probably pick up in the room's seven days and years is all in your name," Benning said.

According to the list, which was left on the podium, past donors included lobbyists group Reynolds American Council, AT&T Media and the Mountain lobbying firms Peterson Group and K&L Partners.

Also in attendance were a number of the state's top lawmakers, including Ben Hurley (R-Vermont) and Sen. Benning (R-Vermont). Ben Hurley (R-Vermont) and Sen. Benning (R-Vermont) were in the room to discuss the Capitol Hill.



"I'm soliciting and networking and sharing an evening with the state."

Benning said he was planning to support the ban on lobbyist fundraisers, but he was not planning to support the ban on lobbyist fundraisers.

Sen. Kevin Miller (R-Vermont), who chairs the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Environment, said he was not planning to support the ban on lobbyist fundraisers.

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PAUL HEINTZ

Burlington." January 7) were responsible for several of our choices. Nik, for our grid-locked photobombs, patski, for Long encouraged us to visit the Vermont operation in Wilder where we learned about cold-climate best practices ["Vermont: Redesigning the Mobile Home for the 21st Century," January 7].

Eric installed three of them: a wall-hung mini-split, a cassette concealed above our kitchen ceiling, and a ducted unit for our living room and dining room — all run by a 30,000BTU hyper-bac compressor. We simply set the thermostat and have enjoyed comfortable indoor temps, even when it's been 15 below zero outside. 3040 walls and R40 in the attic keeps the heat inside. An HRV keeps the indoor air fresh. We love this place!

Gerty Kyle & Eric Bretstrom
WASHO

PUT THAT IN YOUR PIPE

(Re "New Door" for Vermont Gas: *Can Benthall Write the Pipeline Bill?* January 30) Vermont Gas is now trying to get the town of Cornwall to say that they can lay a pipe across Lake Champlain to a business — International Paper — in another state. I am opposed to this planned pipe. Why? Should the pipe leak, either during construction or once in the lake, the destruction of the lake's ecosystem will be catastrophic. Lake Champlain is a gem that we need to take care of, not take chances with. Cornwall has also certified that we're being offered money to smooth the path. We simply do not want this pipe laid anywhere.

Carolyn W. Black
CORNWALL

CRACKING THE CODES

I do have some answers regarding BTV. Why is Burlington often abbreviated as BTV? January 26) A person by the name of Edward R. Knapp served as commissioner of aviation back in the middle of last century. Serving in that role, he did much to serve the local airports by consolidating them under state ownership and control. He went on to lead the National Association of State Aviation Officials.

When it came time to designate the Montpelier Airport, someone took the opportunity to drop Knapp's initials into place. This, of course, was before the decision to designate what had been the Rensselaer Airport as the Edward R. Knapp Airport, which did happen

later. But Newport already had those initials, and the Montpelier airport already had MPV. We who run the 10 state airports often get confused.

Everyone desired unique identifiers, to offer shorthand ticket processing as well as destination clarity. So while the current International Air Transport Association is technically only an international arrangement to assure unique identifiers for passenger airline airports following history to IATA that included abbreviations for train stations. You will find these designations still used by Airtrak — although technically Airtrak does derive from IATA in some instances.

MPK is the train station at Montpelier Junction. That left the Rensselaer Airport with MPV — which was a bit of a dilemma here, come to think of it. The train station did come first, after all, so it got something a bit more logical by way of these letter code.

Along those lines, the Airtrak station serving Burlington is really an Essex Junction and this is ESX. But there is a train station in Burlington, too, which



at one time served passengers. I am hazzarding a guess that it had something better than BTV.

Burlfield has a similar distinction between its rail station and airport: BUD and B172.

The airports that did not have scheduled passenger service did not get three-letter codes, instead receiving a mixture of numbers and letters. Middlebury, which never had passenger service, is known as 680. Several airports that used to have scheduled service, such as Montpelier and Newport, but no longer do, retained their three-letter codes.

I hope this clarifies.

Greg Hegrove
MONTPELIER

Magnus was director of rail, air and public transportation for the Vermont Agency of Transportation from 1997 to 1999.

LOCAL matters

Local Schools 107

Lots of Attention

When Holsome presented the Holsome administration's education agenda, to the House committee two weeks ago, 27 visitors crammed into the room to listen.

"I'm glad to see education's finally getting the attention it deserves," Holsome joked.

Joel Cook, who represents the Vermont-National Education Association in Burlington, was among those squeezed into a corner. In 21 years following education issues for Holsome, he's seen a lot of ideas laid "I've seen all of it, and most of it more often than once," Cook said. "It gives me some measure of insight about the practicality of some of the ideas."

"Our primary interest is in modeling our children and teachers in the classroom," Cook said later.

Unlike Cook, Pond is a newcomer to the Stochastic, but he already blends

in. He learned early on that if he wants a project, people take him more seriously. He's watched as longtime lobbyists register their opinions on a topic with a carefully timed roll of their eyes. And he's noticed that Holsome talks about goals but starts clear of disclaimers, and he wonders if that's the mark of a political appointee being careful not to offend.

"She doesn't come out and say what we ought to do," he said. "She's very good at not answering the questions."

Final hopes for a resolution to the nearly four-month-old FirstPoint strike that put him out of work, but he's also revised by where the education debate is headed. "It's a real gift to someone who is in the political process," he said. "It'll be sad when I can't be there anymore." ☐

Contact: tom@vermontjournal.com, 899-9994, @tomriddle

State Temps 108

Steve Howard, executive director of the Vermont State Employee Association, says many state temps "should be permanent, classified state workers with all the benefits because they are doing the work of state workers."

The union argues that many temporary employees are "squeezed" because they often work side by side with permanent staff that receive some of the benefits, such as health insurance, vacation or sick time.

Laurie Matthews, chair of the VSEAs legislative committee cited temps in the corrections department and in the state's environmental lab as examples of slots that ought to be permanent.

But commissioner Spillane believes that temps have a place in state government. He described short-term jobs for such temporary workers as appropriate, such as supplementary workers who help process income-tax filings, answer state park and historic site staff, and extra drivers for winter plowing.

In 2011, the VSEAs went on a back-to-back, pressing the state to grant them sick days. "That is a pretty basic issue," Howard said. "If you are a temp, you should be able to stay home." Union members supported the initiative partly out of self-interest, Howard acknowledged, permanent workers didn't want to be exposed to illness because temps came to work sick.

Howard said the provision was aimed at the last minute because Senate leaders wanted to avoid a floor fight over the more controversial push to mandate paid sick leave for all workplaces. Instead, lawmakers directed Spillane to look at the feasibility of providing sick leave for temporary workers.

Spillane's report, filed with the legislature in January, pegged the cost at \$420,000 if 2,000 temporary employees used 90 percent of their sick leave and other workers had to be hired to fill in. The report recommends a simple structure for the benefit if it were to be offered. Workers would earn one hour of sick leave for each 40 hours they work.

Lawmakers take another round of lobbying and debate over a sick pay and Howard said he expects the Senate Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs Committee to take up a bill mandating that all employers offer sick leave.

Meanwhile, the partisan fight — which converts temps to permanent state workers — will come up for review as budget writers develop next year's spending plan. Some lawmakers, such as Assistant House Republican Leader Jason Savage of Swanton, have yet to be persuaded that adding more permanent and bonded-service employees to the state workforce is a good idea.

Savage worries that the long-term costs of building up the state workforce haven't been taken into account. He noted, for example, that the state has struggled to get its pension program on sustainable footing, and hiring more people could aggravate the problem.

Given the state's short-term financial strategy, Savage also questions a hiring strategy that some county to what some businesses do to hard costs. "It is the reverse," he said. "Usually private industry will do outsourcing instead of hiring people." ☐

Contact: nancy@vermontjournal.com, 243-8265

Back to the Landscape: a Solution for Burlington Bus Hub

BY AMY LILLY

Designed landscapes of architecture's modern era — the half-century that ended in the late 1970s — are often neglected, demolished or developed beyond recognition. That hasn't held well for the works of the 20th century's most influential landscape architect, Dan Kiley, a longtime Vermonter whose office was located in Charlotte for most of his career. In fact, the worldwide threat to Kiley's works prompted the Washington, D.C., nonprofit advocacy group the Cultural Landscape Foundation (TCLF) to dedicate to him its 2013 "Landscape" — an annual compendium of threatened or at-risk landscapes.

Yet the fate of Kiley's only surviving completed landscape in Vermont now looks surprisingly sunny. In 1973, he designed the diagonally oriented grid of honey locust trees that surrounds three acres of modernist architect Edward Larrabee Barnes' Cathedral of the Transcendental Congregation in downtown Burlington. The small park was previously threatened both by neglect — the church lacked funds to keep it up — and by the choice of an adjacent street, St. Paul, for the site of Burlington's new bus hub.

Now, thanks to an agreement between the preservation community and the Clarendon County Transportation Authority, the grove will gain \$60,000 worth of an arboreal's attention during construction of the hub, which begins in May, according to OCTA project manager **WENDY CAMERON**. Gradually, pedestrian views of the park on the approach from Church Street will be preserved. By July 2016, riders will be able to wait for buses in an air-conditioned or heated, glass-enclosed room — and still enjoy the grove next door.

Admittedly, the Burlington church park does not have the same visual impact as, say, Kiley's formal design for *Utoplandia da Graça* in São Paulo in 1978, or the pure experiential pleasure of his *Midwile* South Garden at the Art Institute of Chicago, which remains a healthy revision of his 1963 original installation. Both these landscapes feature prominently in a traveling exhibit about surviving Kiley masterpieces that TCLF created in tandem with his *Landscape* designation. The exhibit includes Kiley's Charlotte office grounds but does not mention the Burlington site.

Nonetheless, says **LAURA THORNTON**, executive director of the state historic preservation office of the



Current view of Burlington station grounds (design from Dan Kiley 1973)

VERMONT DESIGNER FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION, Kiley's work is "incredibly significant,"

as the church park is worth conserving. "The original design of the bus hub, Transcendental Congregation, would have been "overwhelming." Developed between 2011 and 2013, that design posited a two-story structure with a 360-foot-long, 70-foot-wide arched glass roof that would have covered and enclosed the entire side of the street adjacent to the church property.

"It was quite ambitious," recalls principal architect **ANDREW BLAKE** of **THORNTON**, who designed both the original and revised plans with help from project manager **WENDY CAMERON** and technical director **PETER HARRIS**, and early input from project architect **CAROLINE HARRIS**.

The design team intended the glass roof and glass wall panels supporting it to conserve views of the park. But those panels were to be mounted on a low concrete wall that ran the length of the street. That feature, says Thornton, "created a physical disconnect with the church property. And the park was never meant to be seen from an enclosure," she adds.

**AMAZINGLY,
THE FINAL DESIGN
APPEARS TO MAKE
EVERYONE HAPPY.**



A previous conceptual design

The new design moves the second story below grade and trades the arched roof for a more modest one that merely spans the width of the in-street island and attached waiting room. In place of the low concrete wall, a black iron fence wall separates the park from the hub, and a diagonal concrete walkway that cuts on St. Paul Street will be dug up. The last two changes are required for safety reasons, to prevent pedestrians from cutting across the hub.

One loss on the preservation side hasn't changed from the old design to the new: What remains of the row of trees along St. Paul Street, which were

unfortunately planted in the city right-of-way, will be removed.

Amazingly, the final design appears to make everyone happy — including Kiley's assistant, **PETER KEE WALKER**, who was principal-in-charge as the cathedral site (Kiley's firm was known for a time as Kiley Thordahl Walker and then, from around 1980, as Kiley Walker, until Walker left in 1986; Kiley died in 2004.)

"To my mind, the transit authority is doing good things," says Walker, 76, from the office in Charlotte where he still works.

Walker is advising OCTA on rehabilitating the trees. The agreement spells

DESIGN



that tab will be closer to budget than were the projected costs for the two-story structure. The project will now cost \$96 million, of which almost \$8 million comes from federal sources, says CCTA's Carlson.

Trischmann is happy, too. "We definitely like the one-story structure," she says, and adds that, overall, the structure is "very respectful of Riley and the historic buildings in the area."

Carlson says the CCTA "best over budgeted" to accommodate the preservation community. The transit authority lost a cherished location in the process: a second-floor meeting room that "would have been a great resource," he says, not just for CCTA and its clientele but for other community groups. The below-grade level—which will contain a break room for the drivers with a kitchen, cup room and granddaddy bathroom—was too small to include a meeting room.

Nevertheless, the consensus design may make the bus drivers their customers and the public the biggest winners.

Drivers have had to deal with a tiny break room—cubicle-single-bathroom since the old hub, inadequately sized for use by just four buses, opened along Cherry Street in 1981. A second break room down the street was displaced when LL Bean moved in last summer, forcing drivers to make their way to granddaddy bathrooms several flights up behind the clothing store.

"It's a nightmare," declares seven-year CCTA driver **ANNE**, 55, of Fairlee. "There are the safety concerns about crossing Church Street, and the glassed waiting area is incredibly cold in the winter."

"The new design looks incredible," says **ROSE**, who volunteered the drivers' perspective on the design from the start of the project. "The public is going to be much better served."

Some of the public may notice a new sign—also provided by the agreement—that will note the historical importance of the small grove of trees and the building they were designed to complement. But Trischmann thinks the bus hub itself may make the biggest difference.

"This new transit station will be bringing more people down in this area to look at and appreciate the Riley landscape," she says. ☐

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New Research on Picasso's *Demaiselles d'Avignon*



Fleming Museum Director and Picasso scholar **JANE CULLEN** discusses her new research on the role of colonial photography in *Algeria* as the development of Picasso's *Demaiselles d'Avignon* to be published in March. Regular Admission.

WEDNESDAY
February 18
12:00 pm

FLEMING

Fleming Museum of Art | 40 Colchester Avenue, Burlington | www.flemingmuseum.org

Home Sweet Homestead: Ben Hewitt's 'Nourishing' Guide to Living on the Land

BY MOLLY ZAPP

BOOKS

"The soil is your greatest heart, lungs, and nervous system" writes **ben hewitt** in his new homesteading guide *Nourishing* by White River Junction's Chelsea Green. *The Nourishing Homestead: One Book to the Land Family Plan for Cultivating Soil, Skills, and Spirit* details many of the homesteading legions of the lower-eastern and lower-mid Atlantic that Hewitt described in his previous book *How I Got Where I Am: Winning About Money and Becoming the Right Guy in the World*. The Coburn-based author draws on the nearly 20 years of experience he and his wife, **maria**, and their two sons have had on their 40-acre homestead. Their results, and the honesty with which Hewitt shares their successes and difficulties, are impressive. The family raises 90 percent of its own food, and gathers wood for heating and building purposes.

Full of advice, information and anecdotes, the book has a back-to-the-land angle reminiscent of 1970s volumes of the 60s and '70s. Yet Hewitt's homesteading lesson is, thankfully, of this century. He challenges the individualistic rhetoric of "self-sufficiency" common in other homesteading how-tos, instead writing passionately about his practical and political need for others. "The more interdependence we develop with family, friends, neighbors, and community the less dependent we become on institutions for beyond our sphere of influence," he writes.

The book introduces the term "precolonial" as Hewitt's metaphor for the combination of agriculture, hydrology, bio-ecology and permaculture farming methods his family synthesizes. Not for nothing does the title echo that of Sally Fallon's 2003 cookbook *Nourishing*



Traditions. Hewitt, like Fallon, adheres to the nutritional principles of Weston A. Price, which discuss a diet rich in pasture animal products and fermented vegetables, and low in sugar and grains.

Among environmentalists and homesteaders, there's heated debate on the appropriateness of livestock on farms and in our diet. Hewitt's respect for his animals' utility and tastiness comes from his experience imagining them into nearly all aspects of his homestead, which he calls *Far of the Land Farm*.

The homestead itself, sheep, chickens, goats and hogs provide meat, fat, dairy, eggs, fiber, insect control, fertilizer and manure and land-clearing services — not to mention companionship and cute

photo ops. Hewitt makes a strong, impassioned case for keeping pasture livestock, without vilifying vegetables — though he doesn't address the question of methane emissions from ruminant animals.

Hewitt's pursuit of health is central to his homesteading practice. He connects soil health — with particular regard to microbes and trace minerals — to the reality and nutritional value of his crops, and donor to his family's health. The book's section on soil remineralization is fascinating, and Hewitt's primer on trace-mineral soil applications goes far beyond conventional considerations of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium.

Despite its wealth of information and some poetic philosophizing, the book draws when Hewitt occasionally seems to forget his audience. He spends pages preaching against the mainstream capitalist economy, processed food and big farm Pharma — written effort, given that most readers interested in homesteading already have similar convictions and concerns. In addition, the lack of nuance with which he describes Weston medicine could grate on readers who have benefited from, say, antidepressants, a polio-free childhood (shucks, vaccines!) and life-long prescription medications.

Still, the book's value as a resource easily outweighs its flaws. The details and contents of *Nourishing Homestead* let readers what can be covered in this article and are perhaps on their own. It's peppered with dozens of tip-filled sidebars, including garlic-savorying advice, a bees-milking how-to and honey advice with future firewood in mind (glad black locust!); Hewitt's guide to evaluating the edibility of wildflowers is concise, practical and funny. What I like to see: cold weather in a body

that's still lumber and maple over a little worm. That's a message it was a recent best.

Hewitt admits to being an extreme homesteader — raising all those animals takes time — and notes that his family hasn't spent a single night away from the homestead together in seven years, despite its interest in travel.

For would-be homesteaders with even a drop of wanderlust, this is no one-model-to-emulate. Seven years without a week-end in nearby Montreal, New York City or the home of an out-of-state friend may seem like a state of disconnection from the broader array of people and cultures outside rural Vermont — and also risks thickening into isolation.

For a writer to put his art at her home life, family finances and personal choices on the printed page — inspiring readers and teasing their scrutiny — is a risky and admirable. Written mostly in narrative form, *Nourishing Homestead* is more personal than many homesteading guides, which tend to be organized around project-based how-tos.

Although Hewitt takes care to note that the choices he and his family make are not necessarily the ones others should make, *Nourishing Homestead* sometimes reads like how to Be Ben Hewitt. That could be just what readers devoted to his previous works have been hoping for. **D**

INFO

The Nourishing Homestead: One Book to the Land Family Plan for Cultivating Soil, Skills, and Spirit by Ben Hewitt, with Maria Hewitt. Chelsea Green Publishing: 362 pages, \$29.95. Hewitt will speak about nutrition on Tuesday, February 24, at 6 p.m. at the State Auditorium, University of Vermont Medical Center Campus in Burlington.

'Grey' Day: Vermont Bear Goes Hollywood

BY RICK KISGINK

A star is born. Or, more accurately, "harmless." **VERMONT GREY BEAR CAMPER** has given new meaning to the words "see top" with a Valentine's Day offering that's getting various how-few-most entertainment media outlets the Fifty Shades of Grey bear — male and mini-bearish included. Think of him as the anti-Paul Giamatti. *Balding?*

The body-anticipated Fifty Shades of Grey movie won't hit theaters until Friday, February 13, but fans of the kinky E.L. James best-seller can add a little Christian Grey to their lives with the

click of a mouse today. Clad in a suit and satin tie, the bear has added a bit of fur to the furor surrounding the release of the screen adaptation.

The *Nourishing* author, becoming grayer for movie-industry media and social media alike.

Verity re-chained the item in a February 5 piece profiling some of author James'

more out-of-focus details (arrangements which, the

publication pointed out, are now for *Verity's* film). The *Shadows* — company's wilderness bear was spotlighted alongside de-to products such as Rod Stone and White Silk wine. Meanwhile, and message are available at Target, and Macy

Gal pages featuring book-related slogans such as "Laters, baby?"

On February 5, the *Hollywood Reporter* ran a story focusing on Vermont's Teddy Bear's carefully crafted appeal to adult buyers (an uncommon strategy for adult toys). The article's author took particular note of the website's playfully sassy copy highlighting the Christian Grey Bear's "molding skin," and its appeal to Fifty Shades fans who are "obsessed with Grey. Hitting their lips with anticipation over the movie" and eager "to domestic Valentine's Day."

CLAD IN A SUIT AND SATIN TIE, THE BEAR HAS ADDED A BIT OF FUR TO THE FUROR SURROUNDING THE RELEASE OF THE SCREEN ADAPTATION.

Burlington Film Society and RETN Team Up to Present Old-School Movies

BY ETHAN DE SOE

When television made major inroads into the American lifestyle in the 1950s, big Hollywood studios reacted with panic. The rabbit-eared beast in the living room was sure to spell ruin for motion pictures as we know them. Of course, that was before the studios realized that TV was the perfect way to spin their film libraries into gold. The broadcasting of old movies generated profit for the studios, filled up weekend programming schedules and introduced millions of Americans to "classic" cinema.

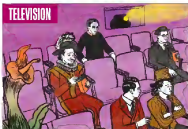
Now, two Burlington groups have taken a page from history in striking up a similar arrangement. A new series on the city's **REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION NETWORK (RETN)** is showing classic films—with a local twist.

For each episode of "Burlington Film Society Presents"—the first of which aired on February 8—a prominent local on-air figure selects a classic film and provides a brief spoken introduction to it. Among the presenters are **JOEY HUNT**, executive director of the **Vermont Regional Film Foundation (VTRF)**, **JOHN KILLICK**, executive director of the **FILM CENTER FOR THE PERFORMANCE ARTS**, and **SHERRY SAVOIE**, co-founder of the **Burlington Film Society (BFS)**. Each host speaks about the ways in which his or her chosen film is personally significant.

Snyder found the show's initial broadcast of the 1963 sex-film classic *The Tighths*, about an alien race of cone-shaped aliens, an odd mix of cinematic pleasure, an adjacent film professor at Burlington College, and one of the co-founders of the series with RETN co-founder **JOEY HUNT**. They partnered with RETN to develop the show, which aims to put a Vermont spin on vintage Hollywood.

Not everyone has a crush on the plush, however. On Thursday, opinions on the fluffy 15-inch bear are divided. Some praise the bear as the ultimate gift for lovers of the old-fashioned, while others accuse an obsession of having gone too far. And, while no one dares have started a successful campaign to protest the toy, the same can't be said for the film it ties into. The group **3000hoursandcounting** is encouraging people to donate \$50 to a domestic violence shelter rather than see the film, on the basis of the belief that the books promote sexual exploitation.

Vermont Teddy Bear itself is no stranger to controversy. The company's colorful, attention-grabbing marketing



JOEY HUNT, content manager for the community-focused network, says that giving a prominent local artist figure was a vital component of the show from its inception. "We've long wanted to put a [film] series together," he says, "but we really felt like we needed a local context for that. It's more relevant to our viewers when we can distribute films like these through some kind of local context. That was always the question: How do you get a local angle out of these films? We thought, Well, let's talk to the film society. They can bring some ideas to the table."

Hunt adds, "We're able to fulfill our mission better when we partner with community organizations. Partnering with Burlington Film Society, whose mission is to cultivate film culture in the area, just made perfect sense."

Snyder concurs, and says the rapid introduction from prominent companies to RETN's educational mission.

Presenters can't select just any film they happen to love; all titles are loaned from longtime independent distributor **Canterbury Films**, which specializes in non-mainstream cinema. The movies' common genres available to TV stations span many eras and tend toward Hollywood's past. Future episodes of "Burlington Film Society Presents" may highlight such gems as the western *One-Eyed Jacks* (1961), the only film Marlon Brando ever directed, the atmosphere 1949 film noir *His Walkie-Talkie*, or even the schlocky 1961 *Love Connection*. In a future *Brink of the Gable*, viewers will have plenty of chances to catch any film they may like. RETN has negotiated two-year unlimited-broadcast licenses for every film in the series.

Underlying the enterprise is a genuine cynicism. If the show is "about" anything, it's about the ways that movies of all kinds inspire local audiences. Snyder says the purpose of "Burlington Film Society Presents" is to spark "a broad discussion about how we're all attached to movies in different ways."

Curious viewers can get a sense of the show's flavor by visiting RETN's website to watch trailers for the films and listen for the locally produced intro.

The series' initial run—in which Hunt will present *Edo Lagoon's The Auguster* (1984) and Ford will present the low-budget horror classic *Carroll of Swell* (1925), among other films—will last six weeks, but RETN already plans to renew it for at least another six. Snyder says he's reached out to other potential hosts in the local arts community.

Hunt and Snyder are well aware that the new show evokes the bygone gothic-mystical, cape-wearing, oddballs who often introduced public-domain movies on local network affiliates in the 1950s and '60s. They note in that association and hint that a possible Halloween episode could deliver the same thrills in chilly.

At press time, no one had yet assumed host duties for a showing of the creepy 1932 Bela Lugosi picture *White Zombie*. ☐

Contact: ethan@sevendaysvt.com

INFO

"Burlington Film Society Presents" airs on RETN (channel 34) on Thursdays at 8 p.m. with retrospectives on Thursdays at 10 p.m. and retrospectives at midnight on Saturdays.



tactics have gotten it in hot water in the past. Who can forget the Great Valentine's fiasco of 2007? Worst! Media! Media! group called on the manufacturer to pull an Grady for You Bear from the shelves, failing to say the bear is a stuffed toy dressed in a white strapless corset adorned with a red heart. As it turned out, the product flew off the shelves before it could be pulled from the store.

So far, the bear doesn't appear to be fying over the company's latest envelope-pushing product. On the contrary, "It's sure to be one of our most popular Valentine's Day buys," CEO **DAVID SHAWNE** has predicted in the press. (The bandage bear has made headlines

everywhere from *USA Today* to the *UK's Daily Mail*). Shakedown commences "I'll just say it. We're obsessed with Grady."

He's not alone. Since the first installment appeared in 2001, more than 100 million copies of James' books have been sold worldwide. In 2011, Forbes named her the highest-earning author on the planet, raking in \$95 million that year alone. Vermont Teddy Bear may be far from the only business tied with the Fifty Shades of Grey juggernaut, but, when it comes to sex, it's got the market sewn up. ☐

INFO

www.vtdbear.com

Head in the Trees

BY ETHAN DE SEIZE

Many of Vermont's trees stand dormant and barren-branched through the cold months, while the evergreens need nothing to enhance their seasonal poise. What's an arborist to do, some might ask? And what does an arborist do, anyway?

To both questions, the answer is "Quite a lot." Warren Spinner, who's been the Burlington city arborist for 34 years, says he and his crew are outside even in the coldest months, pruning away: warmer weather brings the high season of planting. Year-round, Spinner catalogs and manages an "urban forest" of more than 11,000 trees. It's also the truest test of a tree's worth in far less than a few weeks of freedom. *Enter January.*

On a frigid day of comparatively slow arborist activity, Spinner, 40, encouraged *Seven Days* to think about trees in ways we never had before.

SEVEN DAYS: How did you get this job?
WARREN SPINNER: I went to school for arboriculture and park management at UConn-Storham, then worked for a private tree service for three years, but I always wanted to become a municipal arborist. And I wanted to stay in Vermont, if possible. So it was really logical. Even today, there are only three full-time arborists in Vermont—in Rutland, South Burlington and here—who are actually employed by a community to manage its vegetation.

SD: What does a municipal arborist do?
WS: I manage all aspects of that vegetation: the planning, the planting, the maintenance and the care of a tree, starting from its roots at the nursery to maturity. I'm talking about the trees between the curbs and sidewalks—the "greenbelt" area—as well as those in city parks, cemeteries and other public rights of way like the bike paths.

My chief responsibility is to make sure that the city's vegetation is safe, so that the trees are healthy. The safer you can make your trees, the more apt they are to make it through catastrophic weather events. We're also always on the lookout for invasive pests like the emerald ash borer and the Asian longhorn beetle and a host of others. We always have our heads in the trees.

SD: What's your budget?

WS: I work with two budgets: the general fund (about \$100,000) and the dedicated

"streets, trees and sidewalks" tax, which gives us \$100,000. Together we get about \$150,000 for the entire program—salaries, some vehicle purchasing, the cost of the trees.

SD: What are the considerations that go into giving a tree an urban over?

WS: I look at how disease- and insect-resistant they are, how they do in poor soils, how they handle soil compaction, how moisture. It really reduces the palette of trees that you have to select from. Year-round, faster-growing trees, like the red-barked maple cross and elm, do quite well, so we're planting a lot of those in the downtown.

Most people, when they're walking through their neighborhoods, are looking at the trunks and the tops of the trees. They don't understand what's going on below ground.

The root systems and the soil volume and the conditions below ground are extremely important. The bigger the tree is, the larger its benefit for the community—I'm talking about street-tree management. We saw Aldo Gelfi, which are like building blocks that you put below ground. We can fill them full of 100 percent soil without compacting it, which would hinder root development; they also support the asphalt and concrete above them.

SD: What kinds of data do you keep on Burlington's 11,000 trees, and how do you use that information?

WS: You gotta have personnel. We have four full-time people; during the summer we'll have up to five seasonal positions. The majority of our work is seasonal: these trees are pruning. When I first started here, we had a 18-to-36-year pruning cycle. Once every 30 years, I might get to that tree in front of your house. Now, we're at about a four-to-five-year cycle. We're pruning about 2,000 trees a year, and we prune all winter long. We also keep [digital] records on the trees' overall health, trunk diameters, which [each of] leaves, the width of the greenbelt, where the nearby utilities are, the species, the height, the spread, where we cut the trees, and the tree's history with disease and insects. We have data for all 11,000 trees. I can now actively manage all the trees and catalog all their histories.

SD: How has climate change affected your job?

WS: We're seeing the mean temperature on the world warming, and I've been



seeing it happen here over the last 30 or 35 years. As the temperature increases, it puts more demanding on urban trees that are planted in the greenbelt areas. Temperatures are warmer there because of the concrete and asphalt. So we have to try to select the tree that'll survive best in those sites, and then have an aggressive follow-up watering program.

SD: Besides pruning and data collection, what do you do in the off-season?
WS: Winter is when you gotta plan for your spring planting. There's a lot of work to do with the inventory. We work with Branch Out Burlington, which is a citizens tree group, and we established a nursery at the UVM [Vermont Research Center]. We have an area where we actively are growing 400 to 450 trees. On the stump, in the spring, we'll take out 300 to 350

trees to plant in Burlington. At the same time—usually in Green Up Day—we have our tree planting at the nursery, and we get 70 or 80 volunteers to help. We'll also buy other local trees if we can. We save the city a lot of money that way. *SD*

Contact: ethan@sevendaysvt.com

INFO

Warren Spinner will deliver Branch Out Burlington's annual winter seminar "Burlington Urban Forest: A Century of Change" on Thursday, February 15, 4 p.m., at Room 102 of the University of Vermont's Center for Urban Forest in Burlington. Free. branchoutburlington.org

Work is a monthly online newsletter showcasing Vermont and northwestern New England's local food scene. Sign up or join you would like to know more about: newhaveredaysvt.com

Dear Cecil,

Prostitution has been legal in Las Vegas for some time. What's the verdict on legal prostitution? Gay marriage and marijuana use have become accepted. Will legal prostitution always just be a Vegas thing?

Silent John

You need to do your homework, John. First of all, if you bought the services of a prostitute in the city of Las Vegas, you committed a crime. Second, legal prostitution is more widely accepted than we provincial Americans may understand. 50-plus nations, including most of the industrialized West, have adopted it to some degree. The growing legalization worldwide is that the practice is never going away, and that those selling their services are at far greater risk than their clients. Consequently, legislative goals have continued to shift since we last discussed this. Instead of trying to stamp out prostitution, they're increasingly focused on safety.

The modern case against legalizing prostitution is essentially (a) legislation would make it more difficult for police to identify and stop pimps and traffickers, and (b) it's such an inherently violent and degrading profession that ethically it can't be considered. In one survey of prostitutes in nine countries, 60 to 90 percent said they'd been physically assaulted

on the job. My assistant Tim works at a charity that assists prostitutes, and in his experience the Pretty Woman stories are rare: "The vast majority of them are addicted to drugs, and almost none have any hope they'll escape this life."

No one claims prostitution is the career one dreams of as a child. But police action makes an already hard life even harder. British and American police still target prostitutes much more often than their clients, without any measurable deterrent effect. Bails on brothels (where 80 percent of workers say they feel safe) push more prostitutes to the streets, where they are more vulnerable to their clients, drugs and disease. U.S. police and prosecutors regularly seize possessions of condoms as evidence of prostitution, making prostitutes less likely to carry them. And it's not like the cops are getting women off the street and driving them to job-training classes — sex workers make up a third of all female inmates in U.S. prisons, and a criminal record makes finding alternate work even tougher.

Countries that choose to legalize generally enforce health and safety regulations (including STD testing), they often provide unemployment disability and pension benefits for prostitutes, as well as channels through which prostitutes can report violence, enforce contractual rights of payment and transition out of the industry if they wish. Sixty percent of sex workers in the Netherlands and New Zealand said they felt safer reducing clients after legalization. In Nevada, where it's permitted only in licensed brothels in the sleazier casinos (no not Vegas or Reno), there are interviews, photo buttons, and constant monitoring of safety and cleanliness.

That said, legalization isn't easy. plenty of countries have suggested major opportunities for regulation. The Netherlands provides work permits only to EU citizens, forcing immigrants to work illegally and rely heavily on pimps. Germany doesn't mandate condom use, and neither country requires STD testing. It's frequently argued that legalization promotes human trafficking, but it's very



tricky getting solid numbers on a highly illicit activity. The trafficking rate in the Netherlands increased after legalization, but the definition was widely expanded at the same time, making comparisons difficult.

A controversial solution that's rapidly gaining traction is the Swedish model, under which selling sex is legal but buying it isn't. Already in effect in Norway and Iceland and recently approved by Canada, Northern Ireland and the European Parliament, its advocates argue it discourages prostitution and thus minimizes trafficking while sparing prostitutes stigma and legal trouble. Critics counter that it's no substitute for decriminalization, saying it denies women their autonomy and makes prostitution more dangerously making at more lucrative. Yearly Swedish arrest totals have soared wildly — the apparent number of prostitutes may have gone down, but many have likely moved online.

Which brings us to the big got next development: the

growth of the Internet escort industry in the U.S., Germany, the Netherlands — anywhere with decent broadband, basically — prostitutes are leaving over legalized brothels for the online marketplace, where websites list services, connect clients with workers and provide ratings for both. While this is undeniably less safe than the better-run brothels, it does allow prostitutes to work independently without pimps. Escorts report far higher self-esteem and job satisfaction than street prostitutes and brothel workers — on the whole, it seems to be a very different job. Internet-based prostitution will undoubtedly be difficult for governments to keep track of, but it may mean the work can occur more on the workers' own terms.

Is prostitution a great life? Clearly not for my camp. Would I want my daughter doing it? Hell no, and I'd rather nobody else's daughter did it either. But the idea that we're going to abolish or even seriously control this ancient profession is a harmful illusion. We need to protect the women involved to the extent we can and not just drive them underground. If that means decriminalization plus inspections, licensing and other bureaucratic accoutrements, screw it: the marketing — that's what we should do.

INFO

Is there something you need to get straight? Cecil Adams can deliver the Straight Dope on any topic. Write Cecil Adams at the Chicago Reader, 11 E. Wacker, Chicago, IL 60601, or cecil@straight.dope



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WTF? A Wet T-Shirt Contest for Sick Kids and Stray Animals?

Over the years, the Humane Society of Children's County and the University of Vermont Children's Hospital have reaped charitable donations from a variety of community fundraisers: walkathons, golf tournaments, 5K runs, casino cocktail mixers. But recently Seven Days music editor Dan Folleschmidt on promotional material for a novel fundraiser that promised to benefit both. Posted on the web site of Venue Nightclub in South Burlington, it advertised a Hawaiian Get Leif'd Party.

The poster bore logos from both local nonprofits, alongside depictions of young women in bikinis and references to a wet T-shirt contest. The combo tripped our WTF alarm. Did these family-friendly organizations actually lend their names to a night of nipples for the sake of fundraising and recreation?

The philanthropic truth had official additional causes for pious. Not only was it ad riddled with typos and misspellings ("February," "bikis," "performances"), but it featured an outdated corporate logo for the UVM Children's Hospital, which no longer uses "Fluorid Ales" as its name. Still, with bikini being sold through the Fitness Center at the Performing Arts hall office, the February 13 event seemed legit.

Bereft by phone, Venue Nightclub owner Mike Costare recalled that he was approached last fall by a mother and daughter who wanted to throw a winter party to "get people thinking about nice weather." They hoped to use the proceeds to "give something back" to the community.

"We had to ask, 'How can we give this up?'" Costare recalled. His suggestion fell thick to college-age dudes who wanted to use women as transparent teen get dressed in cold wear. He sanctioned the event as similar to the "lees parties" he used to hold at Venue — until the South Burlington five star shut them down.

"If you go down to the tropics in February, this is the kind of stuff you see all the time," Costare said. "We're thinking, like, spring break. I know when I



went to spring break back in 2005, I was the wildest and craziest two weeks of my life."

When asked, if the UVM Children's Hospital and the Humane Society of Children's County had agreed on the adult-themed activity, Costare replied, "Absolutely, yeah."

His assurance came as news to spokespersons from both organizations, who insisted they had no knowledge of the fundraiser until Seven Days made inquiries.

Chaire Gross-Williams, the Humane Society's director of development and communications, characterized the event as "a little outside our taste level." "We have a lot of events in the community that people do on our behalf," she added. "This is certainly not something we're comfortable with."

The tropical-themed site met with an equally chilly reaction from UVM Medical Center spokesperson Mike Noble, who reported, "Our development office knows nothing about it. I don't know what he's trying to pull here, but it doesn't look very reputable to me."

This is not the first time a local nonprofit has been named as a beneficiary without its permission. In 2010, a Burlington man posted ads on Craigslist inviting survivors of sexual assault to participate with him in a "Theatrical

production" to benefit the "Burlington Rape Crisis Center." When the Women's Rape Crisis Center (founded 1987, Works in 2010) learned of the pouting, it immediately disavowed any involvement with the project or its producer. The organization put a warning on its website and notified the police.

Martha Mulken, a executive director of the United Way of Chittenden County explained that, in a rule, nonprofits are mindful of their public image as all fitting with third-party fundraisers (i.e., events not organized by the group itself). Generally, she said, nonprofits make sure that benefits held in their name align with their organizational values and mission.

"If this were us," Mulken added, "we'd be saying, 'You've got to [shut] down the logo. This is not OK!'"

Another concern, she said, is ensuring that the money raised at the event goes to the charity it purportedly supports, a process that's harder to verify with third-party fundraisers.

What inspired the Hawaiian Get Leif'd Party? The Colchester mother who brought the idea to Costare asked not to be identified, and she told Seven Days the idea began mere innocently than the poster might suggest. Last fall, she recalled her daughter, a high school senior, asked to celebrate her 18th birthday in

Montreal with friends. Concerned about letting the teenagers cross the border without chaperones, the mother suggested that they instead organize a party at Venue, which had previously hosted events for high schools. She recalled meeting with Costare, spelling out their intentions and leaving him a \$750 deposit.

"But then everything kept changing and changing," the mother asserted. What began as a spring fling-style party for her daughter — intended to raise money for animals and kids with cancer — became "something really sleazy" that predominantly targeted men 18 and older. (Many of the daughter's friends are still minors and would have been barred from the 18-plus event.) Her daughter is "devastated," the woman said, and has since washed her hands of the benefit. The mom has retained a lawyer to try to recover the \$750 deposit.

Shortly before press time, Costare called Seven Days to report that the Hawaiian Get Leif'd Party had been canceled owing to "lack of ticket sales." Asked to clarify why neither organization had agreed up on the event or the use of its logo, he said communicating with the nonprofits was supposed to be the job of the mother-and-daughter organizers. He won't be returning the party's deposit, he confirmed, as it's too late for him to book another event on that night.

Nancy Colcher, CEO of the Humane Society of Chittenden County, says she considers the entire incident a teachable moment for the organization, she has since contacted the UVM Medical Center to review a copy of its third-party fundraising policies.

"We got lots of wonderful support, from candle sales to dance events, but we don't monitor them very well," Colcher said. "This taught us a lot." ☐

Contact: karp@sevendaysvt.com

INFO

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WAY TO GROW

The Queen City mayor's race has become a referendum on development

BY ALICIA FRESSE

At 2 p.m. on November 20, a cadre of politicians flanked Burlington Mayor Miro Weinberger as he announced a \$200 million redevelopment project in Vermont's largest city. They landed the public-private partnership that would remake the sorry, single-story downtown mall into an urban complex of much-needed housing, retail shops and a hotel.

Roughly an hour earlier, two miles away, a small group of residents in Burlington's only mobile home park huddled outside discussing a letter the median had just dropped off. It was from the park owner, notifying them that the prime real estate on which their houses sit was for sale.

The next day, Progressive City Councilor Jesse Knodell commented on Facebook about what she called an "astonishing & disturbing contrast between the Mayor's 100% support for the redevelopment of RTV Town Center, and non-committed remarks re preserving Burlington Mobile Home Park."

She was referring to a *Burlington Free Press* story, which stated that Weinberger had declined to comment on the situation at Farrington's because he hadn't been fully briefed.

The mayor responded swiftly, writing on Knodell's wall, "The City will work to protect these families, preserve Farrington's as an affordable housing resource, and improve the park's infrastructure conditions." And, he commanded, "I am not blindly supporting the redevelopment, or at this point, any specific plan."

Since then, Weinberger has taken care to show his support for the mobile home park residents, who are organizing to purchase the land as a cooperative.

But he hasn't managed to escape claims that he's cheerleading for development without due regard for the Queen City's most vulnerable residents.

In fact, that charge has become a central theme of the Burlington mayor's race. In his eagerness to grow Vermont's largest city, is Weinberger selling out the values that make it so famously livable?



Mayor Weinberger and four candidates are competing in a live debate on February 16 at the Vermont Auditorium. Going to be there in its Channel 17.

Burlington Mayor Miro Weinberger



Steve Goodland



Greg Gurne



Lloyd Paine

Progressive Past

Democrat Weinberger has two challengers from the left, both of whom have been in Burlington since Bernie Sanders took over city hall in 1987. Progressive candidate Steve Goodland was hired by the self-described socialist and eventually became director of public works—a job he held under five different mayors before retiring last year.

An engineer by trade, Goodland is criticizing his most recent ex-boss for paving the way for developers to turn Burlington into an “ironclad for the wealthy.”

Long before Sanders was elected, left-of-center Greg Gurne was advocating for rent control and other measures to combat gentrification in Burlington. Then he became editor of the former *Vergennes Press*, which covered the Sanders administration and that of his Progressive successor, Peter Clavelle, until the alternative weekly folded in 1999.

(Lloyd Paine, a Libertarian and repeat candidate for city offices, is also running for the city's top slot.)

Despite aggressively trying to distinguish himself from Goodland, Gurne is sounding the same alarm. At a sparsely attended press conference in the Big Heavy World radio studio last Friday he slammed the mayor for trying to “turn the city into a resort town” and “promoting any thing goes building boom.”

Both Goodland and Gurne,—who refer to the incumbent as “developer-in-chief”

—are hoping to garner support among people who are alarmed by a visible increase in downtown development and plans to encourage more. Last spring, *Verde Days* documented seven projects under way, plus 11 more in the permitting process. Since then, one of the largest tracts of open land in the city has fallen into the hands of a developer who wants to build several hundred housing units there. Gurne and Goodland have decried the proposal and brooded the incumbent for failing to use his clout to stop the sale of the stunning lakeside acreage.

perpetually affordable housing for low-income residents. The Queen City was one of the first municipalities in the country to adopt an inclusionary zoning ordinance, which ensures that 15 percent of units in every housing project remain affordable.

Sanders established Burlington's Community and Economic Development Office to implement his vision, according to Brian Paine, who worked there for 18 years, most recently as assistant director for housing. “Barack had an unforgiving commitment to the notion that government should be a tool for allocating re-

former CEDO employees, including MC Michael Monte and his boss, Champion Housing Trust director Brenda Turpe.

Also in the mix: CEDO's current director, Peter Owens, an urban designer and entrepreneur who worked in California and the Upper Valley before Weinberger recruited him to jump-start economic growth in the Queen City.

Cleaning Up the Mess

Waters aside, Weinberger did not inherit a walk in the park when he took office in 2012. He replaced Progressive Bob Kiss, who left the city's finances in shambles. Making matters worse Citibank was suing Burlington for \$23.5 million over the mismanagement of Burlington Tithe.com. Burlington's infrastructure was aging, too—sidewalks, parking lots, municipal buildings and parks had fallen into disrepair.

During his first term, Weinberger tackled a mess on both fronts that is expected to increase the city's overall credit rating. He eliminated deficits in the sewer and water funds. Credit ratings at the airport and the electrical department have improved on his watch. The city received a “clean” audit for 2014, and Weinberger announced that the city was in the black for the first time since 2009. Weinberger created a committee to examine the severely underfunded pension fund, though his administration has yet to propose a fix.

**IN HIS EAGERNESS TO GROW VERMONT'S LARGEST CITY,
IS MAYOR WEINBERGER SELLING OUT THE VALUES
THAT MAKE IT SO FAMOUSLY LIVABLE?**

Weinberger didn't weigh in until a month after the measurement. When he did, the mayor adopted Clavelle's stance—that the city should promote mixed-income housing and a “generous amount” of open space on the site. As Clavelle's position shows, Burlington's Progressives have not been reflexively anti-development over the years.

Beginning with Sanders, Burlington's city leaders have focused on creating

sources and developing the environment to eliminate the great inequalities of wealth and power in our society, rather than to maintain and justify the status quo.” Paine and in a speech at his going-away party last month.

According to Paine, that tradition carried on through the next three decades of predominantly Progressive rule. His city hall farewell book, which had a direct, end-of-the-road feel to it, attracted many

Way to Grow 47-51

Weinberger has also overseen 61 city park upgrades, bike path renovations, sidewalk improvements and a bus-lane for Waterfront Park.

Here's how he summarized his own achievements to the Democrats who recently endorsed him for a second term. "In short, the foundation of our city's progress and prosperity was eroding. As we gathered here today, Burlington faces a much different, and much brighter, future."

Attendees of the Burlington Business Association's annual summit at the Hilton last month embraced that pre-growth approach. The theme was housing, and a panel of developers, nation and experts discussed how high housing costs across the Queen City's economy.

"There is no focus," said Reducore Commercial Group developer Erik Blackman. His colleagues have attributed most of the new construction to real-estate interest rates and overall economic conditions rather than the issue in charge.

During his turn at the podium that morning, Weinberger described a "renaissance" of downtowns across the country, one which Burlington has missed out. He spoke of young professionals leaving town and businesses failing to recruit employees. The culprit: a broken housing market that makes it nearly impossible for people to build downtown.

To illustrate the need for zoning changes and other reforms, the mayor recounted his own experience as a developer with the Hartland Group. Weinberger described the "bubbling" 30-year process of turning a "bored industrial warehouse" on Lakeview Terrace into a modern housing development called the Pickett Lofts. Neighbors fought the project every step of the way but Weinberger's group finally prevailed. "I hope it shows something about the persistence and dedication of those of us who administer."

The mayor has already made some headway. For instance, he eliminated the costly "50-50 rule," which required developers to devote at least 50 percent of the square footage of downtown projects to commercial space.

But he's shooting for more sweeping changes during a second term.

At Weinberger's request, private consultants produced a report last May that analyzed the city's housing affordability crisis and suggested possible reforms. Based on that, CEQO developed a 17-point action plan. Although it hasn't been finalized, the administration is already laying the groundwork for a number of the non-controversial items. They include simplifying the building code, reducing zoning and permitting fees and reevaluating — and perhaps relaxing — historical preservation standards.

The impending housing plan also calls for streamlining the requirement



Weinberger at the Burlington Business Association annual summit press conference on Wednesday.

that downtown developments include a minimum number of parking spaces. Weinberger, who tried to convince the council to do away with that law, will continue to lobby for it. The downtown already has plenty of parking spots, he's argued, and eliminating the rule would reduce the cost of building there.

That includes student housing. Weinberger supports the idea of housing many college kids in the city center as a way of preserving residential neighborhoods around it.

THERE'S NOTHING ABOUT THE POLICIES WE'VE PUT FORWARD THAT WOULD IN ANY WAY STEP AWAY FROM BURLINGTON'S PROUD, RIGHTEOUS HISTORY OF DEVELOPING AFFORDABLE LOW-INCOME HOUSING.

MAYOR MIRO WEINBERGER

Goodland has been especially critical of a proposal to build 1,200 units of student housing downtown. He's said: "I force the colleges to house all of their students on campus. College officials have previously discussed similar proposals in vain."

Meanwhile, the planning and zoning department has been issuing zoning affidavits and city officials to "form-based code." If adopted, it could radically transform how the city controls downtown development. As long as a building meets a standard set of requirements governing its physical appearance — height, setback, etc. — it would

win approval. The new zoning code would also much less up to the discretion of the development review board, and unlike the current ordinance, it wouldn't focus which "uses" — commercial, industrial, residential — go where.

Both Gurns and Goodland caution that form-based code could lock in on something else: fast-track development projects.

Go South

The mayor often points to planETV — a multi-year community planning process for the downtown and waterfront that included input from more than 1,100 residents — as proof that his effort to promote investments in these parts of the city is consistent with what his constituents want.

Hoping to arrive at a similar consensus, Weinberger has launched another planETV specifically for the South End, where a group of artists and business owners are convinced that possible zoning changes could price them out of their studios and work spaces and sanitize the neighborhood's funky, gritty spirit.

In other words, they're worried about gentrification. Weinberger's challenges have emphasized on this last, too. Gurns dismissed the planning process as a strategy to "engineer consent" for the administration's push.

That's what it feels like to South End-based artist Genese Grid, who accuses city officials of "pretending that they are conducting an open community engagement process to find out what we want in the South End" when they "actually have pretty clear directives and agendas."

CEQO director Owens has said the city has an obligation to at least consider removing the South End to allow for more housing. The consultants' report from last May strongly recommended it.

Brace Stiller, a South End resident who worked in CEQO for three decades, and he believes the current administration is overly focused on increasing the city's

housing stock. Building housing is more lucrative for developers, but Stiller warns that it could crowd out businesses in the South End.

Weinberger, who said he shares concerns about gentrification, stressed that no decisions have been made about whether the Enterprise Zone — a stretch of Pine Street that's become a hub for small businesses and artist studios — will be required to allow for housing.

Gurns and Goodland have already come out against it.

Amey Radloff has run her company, Gotham City Graphics, in the South End for the past two decades. She said Goodland's philosophy — that Burlington has always developed "organically" and should continue that approach — resonates with her.

"We obviously have to do it in a smart way," Owens said of striking the right balance in the South End. "We have to do it in a way that respects the character and vibe of Burlington, but we can do that. That's the goal."

The Price of Progress

Concerns about gentrification extend beyond the South End. After the mayor's announcement about the mall redevelopment, Progressive residents immediately started asking for assurances that the project would include more than high-end apartments and luxury stores. It wasn't the first time they had publicly prodded Weinberger to consider the impacts of his policy proposals on low-income people.

"To me, this is the single biggest differentiating factor between Burlington Progressives and the mayor," Radloff said. For her, she said, "it's an afterthought."

Some affordable housing advocates agree that Weinberger seems less attuned to the needs of Burlington's low-income residents. Neil Richardson, a retired Burlington lawyer who represented affordable housing organizations, said, "I think the mayor and the people in CEQO are thoughtful, and I think they are smart, but for reasons I don't understand, I don't think there has been as much emphasis on the needs of providing affordable housing for low-income people as there was under the Clorke administration and the Sanders administration."

Amey Wright, a housing consultant and former CEQO employee, offered a similar assessment. "I just think the city was pretty much at the mercy of the mayor and primarily looking at affordable housing, and I'm not seeing that in the current administration, and I just want to make sure the protections stay strong."

During an interview last week, Weinberger said, "There's nothing about the policies we've put forward that would in any way step away from

What Fabulous Balls!

Picturing 20 years of Burlington's biggest drag party BY KEN PICARD | PHOTOS BY MATTHEW THORSEN

Trying to capture in words the fabulous and flamboyant history of Burlington's Drag Ball is like trying to describe an orgasm as the slip of paper inside a fortune cookie. There's just too much fun to cram into one tight space.

Suffice it to say that, for the past 20 years, Vermont's LGBT community and its many allies have annually crammed themselves into party hats, pumps, wigs, sequined pants and leather corsets to bump, grind and groove the night away.

Formally known as the Winter Is a Drag Ball, the February event is one of Vermont's largest and most outrageous parties, and over the years has raised \$148,279 for the Vermont People With AIDS Coalition. Regardless of which way one's gender bends, it's become a must-attend gala for local residents as well as out-of-towners, some of whom travel from as far away as Boston, Philadelphia and Provincetown.

Longtime Drag Ball organizer and performer Bob Bolyard is known among Vermont glitterati as Amber LeMay of the House of LeMay. He says he's been strapped on the street in other cities by people who tell him that Drag Ball is the only reason they'd drag their asses to Vermont in the dead of winter.

Bolyard says there must have been "something funky" in Burlington's winter in late 1995, when Drag Ball was conceived. (Technically, the first ball was held a few months later, in February 1996.) As he points out, 1995 also marked the advent of several other current Burlington traditions, including the Benguet Phlogs, the Maple Hill March and parade and Seven Days.

Though the LeMays performed at this very first Drag Ball — they'd established their "household" a little more than a year earlier — Bolyard wasn't the event's first organizer. Chris Moss put together the debut ball in the Memorial Auditorium Annex, where



Drag Ball 2014: Higher Ground



MATTHEW THORSEN/GALLO PHOTO

INFO

Drag Ball Live Reception in honor of Miss Chinae Trott and Roger "Wassie" Hayes. Friday, February 13, 7-10 p.m., at 404-5 in Worcester. \$10 suggested donation.

"Winter Is a Drag Ball: A 20th Anniversary Gala." Sunday, February 14, 8 p.m. at Higher Ground Ballroom and Showcase Lounge in South Burlington. \$30-45. 16+ highergroundvt.com

A special reunion live set of the **Charles & Yolanda Show** (just and) will air live on WGAM Channel 35 and on the web at vermont.com on Sunday, February 13, 8-9 p.m. Viewers can chat in real time with the girls at 804-6985.



Charles & Yolanda Show, 2008

Performers: Lucyballs and Amber. The House of LeMay, 2013



2009



Miss TeenyBalls 2014



Miss Champy Balls 1997



2012



2007



2008



Miss TeenyBalls 2012

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LOOK BACK AT 20 YEARS OF DRAG BALL AT SEVENDAYS.VT.COM



Need inspiration for 2017?

Seven Days staff photographer Matthew Therien has been documenting the Drag Ball since 2007. Browse his best shots plus photos and reader contributions from the early years online this week.

THE THEMES

- 1980 Winner is a Drag
- 1981 The Devils
- 1986 President to 'Mary'
- 1990 A Malevolent Night
- 2000 The Search for Insignificant Drag
- 2001 Saturday Night/Drag Fever
- 2002 Cornball
- 2003 A Salute to the Troops
- 2004 Voltaire's Gay Placard Ball
- 2005 Saving 2005
- 2006 Hired Guns
- 2007 Beware the Idiot at Drag
- 2008 Rocky Horror Valentine
- 2009 Queen of Hearts
- 2010 Good and Evil
- 2011 Saturday Night/Drag Fever
- 2012 Campy and Gaylords
- 2013 Fairy Tales and Fantasies
- 2014 Sins and Mommies
- 2015 2015 Anniversary — Choose your theme for them choose!



2010



2014



2015

What Fabulous Balls! BY JAY

everything had to be brought in from elsewhere — lights, staging, sound system and bars.

As Moses explains in a recent email, the initial goal of Drag Ball was to tap into Burlington's local pool of talent, especially in February, when no one wants to be out and about.

"Drag was such an edge thing then," he says, "but people really embraced it." Indeed, Drag Ball was embraced not only by the LGBT community but by the community at large. Moses and Bolyard both emphasize that Drag Ball has always been less about sexuality than about drag in a broad sense — that is, dressing up in a different identity for a night that's not Halloween. From the beginning, Bolyard estimates, about half the attendees have been heterosexual.

At the first Drag Ball, Moses recalls, he worked with fellow organizers Beth Garfield and drag queen/performance artist Roger "Valencia" Mapes to ensure that women got equal representation on stage. That event drew more than 500 parties and raised thousands of dollars for Drag Ball's first beneficiary, Vermont C.H.I.E.S.

Over the years, Drag Ball has consistently presented female talent. Vermont lesbian comedian Janice Perry hosted the event one year; soul singer Tammy Fletcher another. Vermont-based cartoonist Alison Beckdel created the ball's promotional posters for the first few years and depicted some of the characters in her popular "Dykes to Watch Out For" comic strip dressing up for the event. And in 2004, DJ Lia, aka "Dread E. Lyon," created the drag king group Kings Local 802.

"We were frustrated at the limited representation of queer masculinity in the scene and in the crowd," Lia explains. "Founded on union principles — hence the KILBO name — we continue to commit ourselves to performing each year incorporating just and timely issues into our performance, while maintaining the essence of drag, which is about gender play boldness and camp."

In February 1999, the fourth Drag Ball was held at the old Higher Ground in Winooski and, according to Higher Ground co-owner Kerna Statzky, drew 300 people. In 2003, the House of Le May began producing and hosting Drag Ball at the club, and has done so ever since. The event consistently sells out — if not in advance, then the night of the show.

Higher Ground's original location was a dramatic improvement over Memorial Auditorium's basement in terms of staging, lights and bars, but capacity was still limited to 400 people. That all changed in 2005, when the nightclub moved to its current Wilston Road location in South Burlington — and Drag Ball moved with it. Today, with access to Higher Ground's ballroom and Shawnee Lounge, the event accommodates more than 1,000 attendees and over 100 performers, who provide more than six hours of entertainment. Little wonder that Drag Ball still holds the record for the venue's all-time highest attendance, both in box office sales and bar revenues. That's possible, Statzky explains, because unlike most other events, Drag Ball allows new people to come and go all night long.

"We just love it," Statzky adds, noting that he never sees a greater diversity of people in his ballroom or license plates in the parking lot. "What started as a gay event has become this huge winter dance party."

Indeed, Drag Ball is so much about the audience as it is about the enter- tainment outings. At the annual costume parade, held at 11:30 p.m., anyone in the crowd can get up on stage, strut their stuff and show off their costume — which occasionally means wearing almost nothing at all.

This year's 30th annual event will bring back some blasts from the past. They include inaugural Drag Ball performers Miss Christie Turt (coming out of drag retirement in Texas) and Rev Valencia — the latter of whom will be in- duced into the New York Blues Hall of Fame on February 11. DJ Rob Douglas, who DJed the first Drag Ball in 1998, will return to spin discs. Veterans acts Rae Mo'lane and Kings Local 802 will be back for their 10th and 10th years respectively.

Bolyard has advice for any Drag Ball virgins planning to attend this year: Get into the spirit of things and dress up in that outfit you can't find any other excuse to wear.

"You don't have to mess with your gender identification. It's whatever drag means to you," he says. "As Balthus once said, 'We're born naked, and the rest is drag.'" ☺

Contact: jon@sevendaysvt.com

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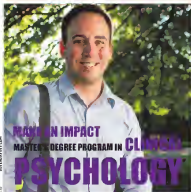
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From Brazil With Love

Mana Threads turns up the heat in fitness wear

BY SARAH TUI DUNN

The hottest new Brazilian trend to hit Burlington has nothing to do with waxes and everything to do with working out. And it's nothing like you've seen on local beaches before. Think capris doctored with palm trees, tank tops with nudes, and spaghetti-strap bras on bold checks, swirls and stripes. Basic black and military green? No way.

"You can't find this anywhere else," said Amanda Leme with a laugh as she picked a pair of pants from a rack. Their gold mosaic pattern shimmered in the lights of her brand-new Church Street shop, Mana Threads. "It's just ours!" she repeated.

True, this never mind that Leme opened a full-sized jacket and boots when Sweet Days spoke with her—as the same day that Winter Storm Jano swooped into Vermont with howling winds and snow flurries and roared near Slo Peaks, Leme has amped up the fitness of dozens of classes at South Burlington's Body Revolution, where she's been a personal trainer since 2008. Her newest career is bringing the sexy from Brazil to Vermont's active women with her line of patterned, colorful workout wear.

Knowing the ropes: "Stand Out," Mana Threads was born from Leme's frustration with frumpy outdoor fashions. Having danced in mountain biking, running, soccer and surfing during her youth in Brazil, she moved to Vermont in 2000. "I was like, 'Mountain, snow—I don't have snow in Brazil. I gotta see that,'" recalled Leme. "Learn another language, learn another culture."

After her visa expired, Leme returned to South America, followed by *Doogie Howser, M.D.* (who's now back home). She then she flew to her surprise, this time in the north of North America, until her heart beat there awaiting it in São Paulo. The couple returned to Vermont in 2006.

"I started falling in love with all Vermont has to offer—the outdoors, and women out there being badass," and Leme, who became a personal trainer in part because of her passion for sports. "And I'm a Brazilian! I happen to be. To a people person, as it fits like a glove. Or like she's gone."

The available workout wear, however, wasn't lining her personality. "I'd go get my tank and think, 'Well, this is it. And I'd just need to be in that thing with the little flower on the collar? No!'"

Every time she returned to Brazil, Leme would buy something "cool and colorful" that naturally drew eyes in the Queen City. "But the style—like a deep V on the boob—didn't match what we needed here," she said. "So I thought, 'Why not start my own thing?'"

FASHION



Leme started sewing up a business in partnership with her sister, Anna Carolina Leme (name in Portuguese slang for "innocent"), and a Brazilian seamstress, Clara Leme (no relation). Between May 2004 and the shop's grand opening last month, she produced 750 pieces of hand-stitched active wear.

Right now, the line ranges from sports bras to full-length pants equipped with a skirt. "It adds curves, you don't need to look like a man!" declared Amanda Leme. It's just about every color of the rainbow. Many pieces offer a kaleidoscope of brilliant hues. Prices range from \$30 for sports bras to \$75 for pants. Options include thicker, tighter fabrics for compression and lighter ones for running in warm weather.

The patterns aren't just playful; they also hide imperfections, Leme explained, and they may even inspire women to perform better. She cited a University of North Carolina study that found that athletes achieved greater results when they wore bright colors, because they were aware of the color stimulation on their appearance.

Leme, once able, has paid extra attention to the decor and ambience of the Mana Threads retail space, which features bold accents of carpet, warm recycled-pallet changing rooms (inspired by Grouse), and a bowl of coffee beans holding business cards and company info. The petite shop

occupies the space upstairs from Little Offices and formerly barns to kaleidoscopes, which has moved across the street.

The potential for competition between the two active-wear businesses isn't lost on Leme, who originally envisioned Mana Threads as a web-only enterprise. But the location choice of her, as did the chance to become even more involved in Chittenden County. The northern end of Church Street, she explained, has become a destination for soccer of dynamic sports clubs.

"To be right in front of Athletes and kaleidoscopes!" she said. "This is like money for me, because people are coming up here to get athletic wear."

Because here is an independent business, Leme noted, she can disregard the constraints of mass production and focus on the community. "I can make whatever I want to make and donate 1 percent to the Little Bells" she said, referring to the local mountain-biking maintenance program for girls.

Inspired by the trail-building and preservation work happening around Vermont, Leme is a nonprofit advocate and a member of the women's mountain-biking race team Mountain Monks. She's also a mentor for Mende Sparks, a scholarship program for girls, and for the Little Bell riding program at the Chittenden Outdoor Family Center.

Of course, there's all warm-weather stuff. How does Leme shake off the deep freeze of Vermont winters? "It's brutal. I'm cold. I've had frostbite everywhere," she admitted, and noted that January was the worst time of year to open her store. "But my roots are getting bigger and bigger here in Vermont. There are many passions here to let it go."

Another challenge has been making sure that Mana Threads can fit most Vermont women, currently, the store skew small and medium. "It's happened so fast, so we don't have a lot of sizes, and I don't want to leave anybody out," said Leme. She'll return from another trip to Brazil this month with a more expansive selection.

Right now, Mana Threads is open Wednesday through Sunday, with additional hours expected this spring and summer. By then, word about its wares will likely have hit local gyms.

"I haven't jumped into anybody I don't know wearing my stuff yet," Leme said. "But when I do, I'll be like, 'Can I give you a hug and take a selfie?'" ☺

Contact: ag@vermontpress.com

INFO

Mana Threads, 20 Church Street, Burlington
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Kid Central

Burlington's King Street Center gets bigger digs — with a youthful splash of art

BY RAMELA POLSTON

After a full year in temporary quarters, the kids returned quickly to King Street Center last month — well, as quickly as children ever do. But they, along with the adults who care for them, will raise a joyful ruckus next Wednesday, February 28, when they celebrate their center's grand opening.

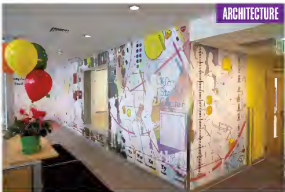
Make that reopening. King Street Youth Center, as it was formerly called, bought the building at 87 King in 1992. The nonprofit organization serves Burlington-area children and teens from low-income families with Head Start preschool, after-school, tutoring, mentoring and other programs. Currently, some 120 kids pass through on any given day.

As KSC evolved over time, its home became sorely inadequate. In 2003, the center launched a \$5.1 million capital campaign to refurbish the building. Thanks to the success of that effort, to financing through Housing Vermont's New Markets Tax Credit program, and to the contributions of TruistCollins and Engelhardt Construction, construction began about a year ago. The handsome new King Street Center is double the size of its predecessor, at about 25,000 square feet.

The sleek red exterior is modern, yet it still fits the character of the neighborhood, an important consideration to principal architect Rolf Richman. Possibility are not likely to assume that the red sports water pumps — and a play area with a great view of the neighborhood. But if they peer in the front window, visitors can see straight through an entryway and the gymnasium to the playground out back, a neat touch that makes the place seem even bigger than it is — and lets in more light.

Stepping inside, a visitor immediately notices the art wall — not a display of kids' art, but a single work that signals the presence of children without being childish. Indeed, it's rare to find a family-friendly artwork of such sophistication.

Created by former Burlington artist Scott Campbell — who recently moved to LA — the six 39-by-5-foot work is not a mural, per se, but a graphic design printed on laminated 2M vinyl paper



Scott Campbell with members of the King Street Center community



and adhered to the wall. The installation was painstaking work, courtesy of Marty Feldman of Winslow's Light Works, who also did the printing. But the resulting wall looks as fun and exciting as a coloring book. And, in one sense, since it is such, the surface is washable.

"I've been doing this kind of work for years," says Campbell of his digital creation, "but usually for print. This is by far the biggest piece I've done." How did he feel when he saw the work installed? "Terrific," says the artist simply. "It's a double validation when people are really excited about it."

Campbell's dynamic design incorporates so many elements, it's hard to know where to look first — and you see more every time you do, says KSC co-developer director Suzanne Kerec. Outlines of kids, based on photographs, appear in various sizes and engaged in different activities. Their dress and features suggest multiple ethnicities, reflecting a population that includes New



THE WHOLE POINT WAS TO PROVIDE A PLACE THAT RESPECTS OUR KIDS.

VICKI SMITH
KING STREET CENTER

Americans. In their lack of specificity, the line drawings convey both diversity and equality.

The wall also depicts a height chart, a multiplication table, a variety of playful graphics, and areas that suggest potential careers, among them: astronomer, architect, educator, tailor, librarian and astronaut.

"Kids need to think about being future leaders," says Jill Badilakis, corporate



responsibility director at Deere&Co, which donated funding for the art wall. "This beautiful space says, 'I'm worth it!'"

"We wanted [KSC] to be a modern, kind of edgy place," says Vicki Smith, KSC's director since 2007. "Jill heard that and thought the kids should be exposed to art."

Dealer has been a benefactor of KSC for several years, and Badilakis has taken the center on as a personal mission, spending time there and talking with both staff and kids. She selected Campbell for the art wall, confident he was the right choice. She was right.

"All three of us burst into tears when we saw this," says Kelly Shuster, co-development director, referring to Kismet and Smith. "Jill and I both both really love this time and really get on the kids," she adds. The wall "is not just for preschoolers, it's for grown ups, too."

Architect Bolman agrees. "I loved it—I thought it was wonderful right from the beginning," he says. It helps that Campbell's vision is in sync with the rest of the project. Bolman, along with TruettCullins colleagues Peter Barron and Andrew Chardain, made aesthetic and structural choices that support the building's multiuse functionality while incorporating the rooms with streamlined design and rich colors. Like Campbell's wall, the place is sophisticated but kid friendly.

Over the months that KSC spent in its temporary home at the Committee on Temporary Shelter's former day station on South Woodstock Avenue, Engelberth essentially gutted the cramped, worn quarters at 67 King, adding a basement

and a full second story. The gymnasium, a couple of classrooms and the playground remained largely intact, explains Smith, but everything else is new: an early preschool room, a tutoring space, an art studio, a performance/meeting room, a dining room, three after school classrooms, a designated teen room and that rooftop play space.

More art appears in hallways throughout the building: nine 30-by-40-inch color portraits of participants in KSC's Kids on the Ball program by Burlington photographer Michael Sipe.

"The whole point was to provide a place that respects our kids and provides them academic support, food and cultural enrichment," says Smith. "We're very excited to share our space with others in the community."

What has ahead for King Street Center, now equipped with a kitchen that provides unlimited opportunities?

"Broad development, staff growth, program development," says Smith. And like the director of any nonprofit, she points to the endless fundraising those activities require. "At the beginning of every fiscal year, we go back to zero and have to raise \$1.2 million for our annual budget," she notes.

Meanwhile, KSC's staff and all its families will throw a party to inaugurate the new digs. For a building that began life as a typewriter factory, 67 King Street has come a long way. ☐

INFO

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BY RAE

Q: Were you always a foodie?**RW:** There are pictures of me in the kitchen with my mom at a very young age. Not a lot of things in the world make sense, but food does.**Q: What made you love pastry?****RW:** When I was 14, I saw a PETA [People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals] video and became vegan, but immediately missed chocolate chip cookies. So I needed to find substitutes to make my own.

Pastry is all chemistry. It's not all about making a really great carrot. It's really interesting with pastry — seeing, say, if I heat this the dough better, what's going to happen? The patience involved helps me in my daily practice of being a human.

Q: Name three foods that make life worth living.**RW:** I would go more with three mouthfuls. I'm really drawn to textures. I love ice cream and that feeling of cold creaminess. Whether it's chips or dehydrated seaweed sprinkles, I like the feeling of crunch. I drink a lot of chicken broth and warm bone broths in general. Cold and creamy, crunchy, and hot and delicious — those are my favorites.**Q: What's the last thing you ate?****RW:** An avocado. Just with a spoon. It was really soft and very good for the gut. Before that, it was yogurt with pecans and sticky with almond butter.**Q: If you left Vermont, what local products would you miss most?****RW:** Vegetables. Oh, God, everything I used to learn about around 2012. I felt really engaged in my life. I read out to stay in one city for too long.

Some friends and I went for a road trip in an old biodiesel school bus, and every city we went to, I kept trying to find the food. Not the restaurants — I went into the co-op.

The beds just don't taste as good in California. The kale doesn't have the same texture in Wisconsin. There's something about this land, and especially the people here, that I haven't been able to find anywhere else.

Q: If you could try the specialty of any pastry chef, what would it be?**RW:** I have a really deep desire to try Pierre Herme's macarons. I've been told by someone I trust immensely that they are life-changing. It's on my bucket list.

Making macarons



Pecan butter cookies

Q: You're trying to impress somebody with your culinary prowess. What do you make?**RW:** Whenever I find it in the woods that day. Foraging is one of my favorite things. I have a little garden where I mostly grow herbs. What do I do with five pounds of ramps and five fiddleheads and three indulging mushrooms, a couple chestnuts and maybe a pheasant's back mushroom and some arctic? I love when people surprise visit me and I have to figure out, How can I cook with what's around?**Q: What's the best dessert you've ever had?****RW:** I guess there would be two answers. I had Christmas Town's grapefruit pie, and it totally knocked me out. It was absolutely amazing.

Actually, one of the best things about working in a kitchen is you get to meet and watch some of the best. When I was at Blackbird, [then-chef] Aaron [Dusky] was picking strawberries, and we were making pistachio butter for this hot dish. And Aaron made these different flatbread ice creams, one being rosemary.

That with the pistachio butter with the pickled strawberries... It's been about five years, and I was getting yelled at for eating this wine on place, but I'm still thinking about it.

Q: What's your favorite beverage?**RW:** Coffee. I like coffee. I love peach tea. I used to be a whiskey girl, definitely. I love bubbles and textures in drinks. I love when drinks change when you drink them. Cocktails can change as you drink them.

I do a lot of fermented beverages. I like to make kombucha with alternate sugars. I love vinegar-based drinks. Carbonated mineral water with a shot of vinegar is amazing and feels so good.

Q: If you weren't a chef, what would your job be?**RW:** Kindergarten art teacher. It was what I was gonna do. I went to art school with the intention of getting my master's in education. I love kids. They're little future people. ☺

Contact: abo@zerogravity.com

SIDE *dishes*

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A3



draft for foodies. Its ginger beer appears in a Burlington Mule, a local twist on the Moscow Mule spiked with vodka from Vermont's native distillers. Other cocktails pay homage to Mitsuwa's warm connection with muddled berries and lemons and Shiso-Ni's (wasabi infused with honey ginger syrup and lemon). And, for acrophiles, the Army's entire 10-kettle menu bar is available by the glass.

During warmer weather, seating will expand to a patio adjacent to Main Street, and Quinn says he's planning a big party for the Magic Hat March Gras parade on Saturday, February 28. "Our windows actually open to the street," he says, "so you can better behold our wine!"

—HAE

Crumbs

UPPERMERE LOCAL NEWS: A new Asian restaurant concept will soon debut in St. Albans. Manager JAMES CHEN says **AND A WOODS** is slated for an early March opening at 133 North Main Street, the former location of Mama Sacks House. Modeled on restaurants popular in the American South, the new eatery will focus on a wide range of Asian noodles prepared to customers' specifications.

Chen says these noodle varieties will include Asian and Vietnamese-style rice vermicelli — each available with the customer's choice of vegetables and meats, prepared in a stir-fry or soup. Stir-fries will be made hibachi style, on a large griddle. "It's a new style idea for us," says Chen.

As for the "AND" part of the name, it refers to Mangolian-style meats "in a stick, that you're

cooking in front of everybody." Chen says. Another planned attraction is the bar featuring eight beers on tap.

—AL

On January 25, Mitsuwa's APOLLO DINER closed its doors for good. Reached by phone on Monday, **NASH WILLIAMS**, wife of owner **ALL WILLIAMS**, offered a statement: "We want to thank our loyal customers and hardworking employees for spending their time with us." She noted that the building, which the Apollo was leasing, is now available, and that she hopes to see former Apollo regulars at **SOVEREIGN** in Burlington and the new **WINE** in Colchester.

—H. PE

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Northern Thai

Seasoned Traveler: Dusi Thai Cuisine, Newport

BY HANNAH PALMER Egan



The first time Bangkok natives Exzy Saengsiri and Jenny Thamsauk came to Vermont, it was New Year's Week, 2004. Both in their late forties and perennials in life and business, the two women were visiting friends who were working at Middlebury's Sabai Sabai Thai Cuisine.

The weather was cold, even by Vermont standards. The temperatures dipped below zero for three days. For Vermonters hating the post-holiday blues, it might have seemed like a fine time to book a flight to Thailand. The Thai women, however, were smitten with the Green Mountains. During their visit, they learned that the owners of Newport's Sabai Thai Cuisine were looking to sell their downtown restaurant. "We were very interested in having a business here," Saengsiri said. Within 16 months, they did.

The women returned to Thailand and got to work packing up their old lives and planning new ones in Vermont. As they got money together and waited for their S-1 investor visas to go through, Saengsiri and Thamsauk formalized their concept and commissioned hand-stitched, spiral-bound menu books with silver elephants on the front. They had food photos taken and wrote promotional copy.

At the Bangkok Sunday market, they purchased handmade wooden check presenters and little stands for drinks and dahiya, as well as tapestries and other decor items. "Everything was ready before we came," Saengsiri said. Since the space was already outfitted as a Thai restaurant, building renovations were mostly cosmetic.

Last November, the couple opened Dusi Thai Cuisine in the former Bean Thai space at 158 Main Street. In January they installed their Sabai Sabai friends (who had subsequently been working in Chicago) in the kitchen.

But why Vermont? I wanted to know on an icy February evening, as snow began to swirl outside. And why, of all places, the uppy-top of the Northeast Kingdom? "We wanted to have more on people's minds," Saengsiri explained, standing behind the bar. "We wanted to do all that we can."



Curry and pad kra-pow at Dusi.

**PEOPLE SOMETIMES SAY,
"IT BURNS MY LIPS,
BUT IT MAKES ME WARM."
SOMETIMES THEY CRY,
BUT THEY'RE HAPPY.**

EXZY SAENG SIRI

Toward that end, the Dusi Thai menu is long. Page after page of dishes, photographed in full color, range from authentic, traditional Thai, such as cold lasting tang—a crisp, spicy dish stuffed with delicately seasoned chicken, carrots and pork—to those more familiar to Americans, such as spring rolls, pad Thai and tempura-fried vegetables.

"We picked the most popular dishes from Thailand," Saengsiri said, "and dishes we know foreigners like." The

entrepreneur said she lived in Perth, Australia, for a year and a half, where she became acquainted with the Western palate.

Though Dusi Thai's menu is fairly food, monthly specials—such as grilled salmon with garlic sauce or lamb chops with crab sauce—keep things fresh. In summer, there will be homemade coconut ice cream, a traditional Thai dessert.

Locating ingredients is often a challenge, Saengsiri said. Freshly pungent, brown-seeded kaffir lime leaf, used in curries, greens, salads and pretty much everything else, is difficult to find in the Kingdom, but is indispensable to Thai cooking, so is spicy Thai basil. Saengsiri orders these herbs and other specialty ingredients weekly from New York.

Authentic flavor is a big concern, as part of the Dusi mission was bring Thai culture to Vermont. The women are eager to share their lifestyle and their warm, friendly smiles in Newport. When it comes to their food, they're willing to accommodate Vermonters' palates to a degree, but they're uncompromising in some ways. "We have to inform the customer," Saengsiri said. "When they say they like it but, we say, 'This is Thai food.' They have to learn."

When I tried it, a cool bowl of herb (ground-chicken salad), seasoned with fish sauce and shallot, burned with pulverized Thai chili even though it was served with a sprig of mouth cooling mint. The pad kra-pow—Thai basil stir fry—was spicy, sweet and savory, with strips of chicken and lots of basil mingled with carrots, peppers, onions and other vegetables cooked to a crisp but chewable state.

Khao soi is a traditional northern Thai curried-soo-ho bowl (one of my favorites) that can vary from a soup to a more stew-like consistency, depending on the cook. Dusi Thai's version was a thick, spoon-creeping soup. The expected sort of crisp, fried egg noodles rested on a bed of chewy noodles in a rich, creamy broth. With such mouthful, the best belt to a belly warming here.



More food after the classifieds section. PAGE 47

PHOTO COURTESY OF SAN SAI



Great dining room



Autumn



The curry

as a cool blue evening fall outside the door to cooling windows.

I ordered everything "hot" having verified my predisposition for heat, and found everything masterfully spicy but not over the top.

Lifting a spoonful of broth to my lips, I wondered aloud, "Is anyone ever sent anything back for being too spicy?" "Not Never!" Saengprad said with a laugh. "People sometimes say, 'It burns my lips, but it makes me warm.' Sometimes they cry, but they're happy."

So far, the restaurant on corner road, which had nothing but satisfied customers. In the few months since Dault Thai's launch, it's developed a local following, including an elderly lady who visits nightly for Thai coffee (as she did at Buan Thai before it closed). "I used to help out a little at Buan Thai," the waitress told me, "but Buan

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food

Northern Thai by Liz



won't let me lift a finger. So I just have my drink and that's it. But the food is also very good!"

Sengorn smiled. "The people here are very kind," she said. "We've had a lot of support."

The Newport newcomers are no strangers to running a small business, though—Sengorn owned a noodle joint in Bangkok, and Thuanzank's family runs a telecommunications company back home. "Running the business is not as different here than in Thailand," Sengorn said. "But it's changed our lives."

Life is easier here, she added. "Everything was always so busy and crazy in Bangkok," she said. "People everywhere at all times."

But in Thailand, dining isn't dependent on the season, Sengorn said she wasn't prepared for Vermont's winter chill. "Everything was going very well until a few weeks ago," she said, noting that business took a nosedive during the first few weeks of January. "It's our first year, so we don't know the cycles," Sengorn admitted. "In Thailand, there's no winter or summer. People eat out all the time. Here, everything stops."

The afternoon I was there, she said she sent her waitress home. "It was too quiet," she said. But as we spoke, several parties arrived for dinner, despite the falling temperatures.

And *Daan Thai* is a welcoming place. The dining room, divided into three areas by wicker half walls, feels cozy. The murals, painted on collages are painted a sunny gold, and the exposed-brick walls are hung with Thai tapestries. At the back of the building, a large banquet



room features a full service bar. It's easy to imagine dancing in the soft space at parties or receptions, since the Kingdom arrives from its winter slumber.

But even in the quiet days of early February, Sengorn said she's not worried. "We are just happy to cook the food and so, so glad people are enjoying it," she said. "We enjoy that, too. I love serving. We are happy!"

Contact: hannah@everdaystent.com

INFO

Daan Thai Cuisine, 156 Main Street, Newport, 451-8305, facebook.com/daanthaicuisine, newspkvt.com

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Received 20 October 2004

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CYRILLE AMEL QUARTIER
 Publishing February 14, 2009, p. 14
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Big Air

In 1932, Bluma Hall was constructed in the middle of a cornfield in Brookhaven. This week, it's home to the U.S. Olympic Winter Games. But the Jump, an international competition that draws skiers from the U.S., Canada and Europe in New England's only International Ski Federation-approved jump. More than 40 competitors — including prospects for the 2002 Winter Olympics — will jump a 90-meter track that facilitates speeds up to 60 mph. Once airborne, athletes travel more than 200 feet before landing down. As the only domestic stop on this year's FIS Cup series to include women, the event promises a glimpse into the future of the sport.

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FEB 17 & FEB 18 | MUSIC

FEB. 14 & 15 | SPORTS



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FALLTER

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FEB. 14 | MUSIC



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music

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WED FEB 13

ROCK BALK 10:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.

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FRI.13

activities

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community

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calendar

5/1/13 WED

ARABIAN PLAYING WITH BASILISK Four years
up in April, four companies in a 4-gym, games,
music, dance and puppet show that blend
Middle Eastern, 40s & 50s. Free. Info: 761-6618

SENIORS AND THEIR GOLF Cheshire Golf
course, 40+ and older. Friendly annual
club thingy-thingy. 10:30. Cost: \$10.00. Info:
761-6618

YOUTH PARK CLIMBERS Kids making an entry
into the world of climbing. 10:30-11:30 a.m.
Free. Info: 761-6618

language

ORANGE HILL FRENCH CONVERSATION French for
everyone. 10:30-11:30 a.m. Free. Info: 761-6618

music

ARABIAN PLAYING WITH BASILISK Four years
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movies

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news

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outdoors

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performing arts

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science

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social

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sports

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technology

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travel

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books

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MON. 16

business

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community

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conferences

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entertainment

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events

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food & drink

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health & fitness

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home

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law

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local

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politics

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By E.T.N

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5/1/13 WED

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[illegible]

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PRENATAL TESTING STUDIES: Prenatal and postnatal blood and tissue samples obtained from 1,000 twins and 1,000 children born to 1,000 mothers. The study was conducted by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Center for Human Genome Research (NCHGR). The study was funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Center for Human Genome Research (NCHGR). The study was funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Center for Human Genome Research (NCHGR). The study was funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Center for Human Genome Research (NCHGR).

THEIR MOUNTAINABLE Green Dragon Nikes/Tenn-Tenn-Generals and 2000-01's 74-73-99. Laker thousand other vocal voices rose in protest in the final moments. In an early form of Tag B, in the clubhouse lounge, thirty-five phone and e-mail writing of Miami's institutions, managers, coaches, and players, mostly by e-mail, started the 2-11-01 at 11:00 AM. The 2-11-01 was a success.

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File Under?

Four more local albums you (probably) haven't heard

BY DAN ROLLER

So many records, so little time. *Seven Days* gets more album submissions than we know what to do with. And given the ease of record making these days, it's difficult to keep up. Still, we try to get to every local release that comes across the music desk, no matter how obscure or far out.

To that end, here are four albums that likely flew under the radar of your average local music fan. In some cases, they represent the outmost boundaries of local music. Others simply slipped through the cracks. But each is worth a listen. ☺

Vivek Patel, *Samsara*

(SELF-RELEASED CD, DIGITAL DOWNLOAD)

Vivek Patel is a Jericho-based visual artist who, in addition to abstract painting, dabbles in electronic music production. Patel's first effort, *Wakeup Vivek*, came in 2013 under the pseudonym Technobots. That record was strongly influenced by Goa trance, a subset of house music that developed in Goa, India, in the early 1990s. Patel's latest, *Samsara*, released under his own name, follows a similar path, but is equally influenced by Buddhism.

In a handwritten message to *Seven Days*, Patel explains that Buddhism is rooted in the idea of "cyclical existence," birth and rebirth. He adds that most electronic music is built upon repeating themes and ideas. So the fusion of the two would seem natural. "Hopefully, I have done something different," he writes. He has.

Samsara is an instantly desirable collection of 11 cuts deeply inspired by classic house music. And much like its source material from Goa, it is easy to fall, hypnotized, into its trance-like grooves. Patel's production has a meditative quality that makes the album as suitable for dancing as zoning out — and pondering the cyclical nature of human existence.

www.vpatel.com

Allison Mann, *For My Mother and Father: The Best Songs of Their Times, Vol. One*

(SELF-RELEASED CD, DIGITAL DOWNLOAD)

Local jazz singer Allison Mann released her debut album, *The Right Time*, in 2004. But then, as so often happens, life happened. Mann subsequently devoted her energies to her family and career rather than music. A full decade later, she is singing and swinging again. Her latest record, *For My Mother and Father: The Best Songs of Their Times, Vol. One*, released in late 2014, should be cause for celebration among local jazz heads.

As his title implies, the album pays homage to Mann's parents. It was recorded live at a Montpelier church and features 16 tracks, mostly classics from the 1940s and '40s, when Ma and Pa Mann came of age. Certainly, the likes of "Thomas From Heaven," "Moon River" and "Over the Rainbow" are well-worn staples of the Great American Songbook. But through both her own considerable talents and her obvious personal connection to the material, Mann breathes new life into these chestnuts.

Mann sings with honey laced but is equally adept at bringing it down in more somber moments. She's got support from a crack backing band composed of some of the area's finest jazz players, including Cedar Carr, Alex Ribeiro, Tom Cleary, Colin McCarthey, Chris Peterson and Elliot Bang. That tag is worth the price of admission alone. But it's Mann's show, and she delivers with grace and gusto. Mann's hoping we don't have to wait into their 30 years for volume two. allisonmann.net

Bad Smell, *"The Lost Sequence" / "AV6"*

(SELF-RELEASED CASSETTE)

Bad Smell consists of local songwriting origins Ray Fink and percussionist Jose Russell (Shady Betty, ex-Ball Rightly). Ray is best known as the architect of "ED" (Thunder y Su Compañía Cuchilla), an all-star outfit that also includes Russell. But unlike that band, which trades in off-kilter Tejano rock, Bad Smell uses its equally off-kilter electro-punk rooted, or ironic, "hyperpop-craze" "Via Europey" "use head jazz" and "Conso Latin boogie."

For the benefit of those who didn't grow up in the 1960s with a Casio, that last designation refers to a "Laser" beat programmed into the cheap synth keyboard. In truth, the beat is about as Latin as Taco Bell is Mexican. But that's where the obscenity of it, not the beat, provides the foundation for the two songs found on Bad Smell's debut cassette.

On Side A, "The Lost Sequence" opens on a keyboard riff seemingly inspired by the theme of the 1960s TV show "Knight Rider," perhaps if reimagined

by Kinnadee (composer John Carpenter and Kraftwerk). It's weird, wacky stuff, held together by Russell's banger line percussion.

On Side B, we get "AV6," which once more strongly evokes Carpenter's spooky minimalist synth work — think the soundtrack for *The Fog* and *Escape From New York*, in particular. www.badsmell.com

Max Pearl, *Mind Ball 3D*

(SELF-RELEASED CD)

On his third album, *Mind Ball 3D*, local music... or, person, Max Pearl finally offers some clues into just what the fuck he's doing. On his previous two albums, many things were left unclear, likely intentionally so. For example, is Max Pearl a solo artist or a band? Is Max Pearl simply *he* doing? Where do his babies come from? And if babies were forced to listen to Max Pearl for extended periods, would they try and go back there? We can't tell for sure.

Mind Ball 3D sheds at least a glimmer of light on Pearl, who appears to be a person — though maybe also a band (like Patrick Watson is both). We know this because Pearl includes musician credits in the liner notes for the first time. These reveal he is not acting alone. Unless guitar and bassist Ben Jagen, keyboardist Mark Kimer and drummer Tom Amerson are Pearl's imaginary friends, which, after listening to the records already and six tracks, can't be ruled out. And, yes, *Mind Ball 3D* comes with 3D glasses. Because of course it does.

The music plays in short stings of dozen metal, industrial riffs, squalls of guitar, apocalyptic drone and ominous vocals uttered in some tongue of offbeat language were chopped out of a magazine with rusty scissors and clumsily pasted back together like a ransom note. New question: What is Max Pearl holding for ransom? The answer may be anyone who hits "play" on *Mind Ball 3D*.

You can probably only get this album if you are the music czar at *Seven Days*. Because with pretty sure Max Pearl is not only to comment, here and may have been best kept in a basement. Send help.

SOUNDbites

BY DAN BELLES

Oh, Death

This weekend marks a curious calendar convergence: This Friday, February 13, is, well, Friday the 13th, which is always good for some oddball shenanigans.

The following day, Saturday, February 14, is Valentine's Day. Frankly, I'm not sure which is more terrifying. (By the way, that sound you're hearing is the collective "Oh, shit!" muttered by every coupled-up reader who just now realized they had completely forgotten about V Day.)

We'll deal with what to do about that in a moment — feel free to skip ahead if you're really freakin' out. But we begin with what should be one of the first landmark concerts of the year: **DEATH** at the Flynn MainStage on Friday.

If you're unfamiliar with the story of Death — i.e., where the hell have you been? It was only one of the coolest rock-and-roll stories of the last 30 years, local or otherwise. Just go Google "A Band Called Death" and come back when you've finished. I'll wait.

Amazing, right?

Now that we're all up to speed, the current incarnation of Death, which features original members **BOBBER BARNHART** and guitarist **SCOTT BLOOM** in place of late founding member **BARKHURST**, have been touring with their original songs from the late 1970s for several years now. And they've released three albums of archival material... *For the Whole World to See* (2009), *Spiritual Mosaic Revisited* (2011) and *Death III* (2014). One of the big questions surrounding the band since it was reborn in 2008 was whether it would resume writing new material. Would there ever be a "new" Death record?

The answer is yes.

Death plans to release **NEW**, its first collection of newly recorded material since the late 1970s, on April 21. However, it's prudent to point out that the record is not completely new, per se. And that's a good thing. While there are songs penned by the current band, many of the tunes presented on the new record were originally conceived in the late 1970s and were co-written by Bobby and David Hickey but never finished. By all accounts, the posthumous and unseen presence David Hickey was Death's artistic visionary. Taking nothing away from Death songs

that were written more

recently, it's spread that he'll have such significant input from beyond the grave.

Last week, *Drain City*, the Chicago label that will distribute the new album, released one such single from KEIN, "Look at Your Life." (It's a record will

technically live on Death's own Trypnic Records, RTW.) So these songs

are, the song sounds as though it could have been an outtake from... *For the Whole World to See*. Featuring punchy guitar riffs, sparse drumming and that as

distinctively high-watt,

angry lyrics that sound like they were written by an angry young man — which, I suppose, they were — it's something close to classic Death.

It's kind of a bummer that we'll have to wait another couple of months to hear this whole thing. But I've got a feeling that those who check out the Flynn show on Friday might get a sneak peek or two at the new stuff. Also, show up early to catch our own show of Death, **BOBBER BARNHART** and **SCOTT BLOOM**, *Gold*, *Power* *Two Sessions* in *THE PIT*. Come to think of it, this might be the lastest show in the history of that stately old theater.

(Full disclosure: **BOBBER BARNHART** is a Screen Dops employee.)

Oh, Shit

So this Saturday, February 14, is Valentine's Day. I know, I know. If you're in a relationship, it sucks. If you're single, it sucks. (Just imagine if you're in a polyamorous relationship like the **CRACKIN' PEAS** wrote about in last week's Love & Marriage issue.)

(Yes.)

Anyway, this year Valentine's Day has the potential to be a bit of fun, regardless of your relationship status. That's because several shows on the docket should provide adequate entertainment, whether you're looking to cozy up with your sweetie or commiserate/celebrate your independence with fellow singles.

The runs over at a lobby the **CRACKIN' PEAS** at *Arctico*, which we've spotlighted on page 68. But the local drive, and the romantic angle, are

openers **ARCTICO** a **WASH**, we might just be the most in-love couple I've ever met. The affection they have for each other really shines through in their music. So if you're looking to swoon with your special guy or gal, this might be the place for you.

If you're looking for something a little more offbeat, I'd recommend **SHIRAZ** *SHIRAZ* at *Radio* *Beats*, which is pretty much exactly what



Photo: David Laundy

DEATH

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live culture
PERFORMING ARTS NEWS + VIEWS

For up to the minute news about the local music scene, follow @dotmusic on Twitter or read the Live Culture blog www.dannips.com/liveculture.

SOUNDbites

ENTERTAINMENT



Doughty & Hovde

it sounds like *WALLA* serving us a live hooking band for karaoke singers. And it's *intentionally* fun. But take the recommendations with two grains of salt. One, I'm related to *Smekkle* at the Precipice last summer.

(An aside on the letter print: *Like Smekkle* is a lot harder than it looks. So, there's no video screen to guide you, only a lyric sheet, so you really

have to know the song. Two, most of the people who stay up are also good musicians, so it can be intimidating if you're rusty. If necessary, arrive, I tend to follow our favorite women at the Precipice. Thanks for that, *Smekkle*!

Moving on, the *same* *WALLA* will headline *Show Some Love*, a release party for a new *Ally* at Nectar's. That's a bar brewed by 19th Star Brewing in A-Dog's home town of St. Albans.

It actually debuted on A-Dog Day last August and was *really* tasty. At least I think it was. I had quite a few of them. A night of standup comedy can make for a great date. If only we had a comedy club, right?

While we await the opening of the physical Vermont Comedy Club — news on that front, I promise — the metaphysical Vermont Comedy Club presents *Love and Laughter at the Shanty Pankake* in Burlington. And it should be a good one, featuring Vermont's Funniest Comedian 2014 winner GRANT HOGAN, KEMMEL FARRALL (a 2014 VFC finalist), FRANK REMONDINI (aka), Vermont Comedy Shows founder JOSH LEAVITT and host and VCC cofounder NATHAN HARTSHORN.

Meanwhile, in Montpelier, I'd suggest *SWELLER* at Charlie-O's World Pankake. This isn't really a *Vale* state's show, precisely. But front man *SWELLER* *RAVAY* recently passed along their latest demo and I really dig it. If you're in the mood for some raucous publically on a soundtrack to drowning your sorrows in whiskey, look no further.

Last but not least, if acoustics are more your thing, check out the next installment of *WordCrik*, the traveling spoken word and live loop open mic that makes its next stop at 242 Main on V-Day. If you've never been, the basic gist is that wordsmiths of myriad stripes — also poets, foray rappers, whatever — drop in and share their verbiage in an open and supportive setting in which you are invited to either participate or simply listen to the show. This installment features acclaimed *Brooklyn* poet/farmer

LAUREN KANE (SHOWN LANDING) who will perform as her "deep winter alter ego," LUTHERAN MAN.

By the way, each edition of *WordCrik* centers around a one-word theme. Come to guess what it is this time? ☺

Listening In

A peek at what was on my (this, that, and the other) record player, etc., this week.

PATMYE JOHN HENRY, *Ally* (this, that, and the other)

JAY HENRY, *Slipping Paper*

ROCK BERRY, *The Other Side*

WALLA, *Days Are Gone*

WALLY WALLY, *WALLY WALLY*, *WALLY WALLY*

WALLY WALLY, *WALLY WALLY*, *WALLY WALLY*



25 Years of Rusty Nail

W211 KIZOMBIA with SHANTOS MT 10PM

ZENSOAY with LA CARA VILLA 10PM-11PM

T2122 UMN SOCCER TEAM EVENT 8PM-10PM

F2123 SALSIA with JAY RED 10PM

FEEL GOOD FRIDAY

with JAY BARR 10PM-11PM

S2124 FOR THE LOVE OF HOUSE with

DAZ ATAK, JACK BARRY, VILLA,

GORETIC & FATTY SHAN 10PM-11PM

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WEDNESDAY 10PM-11PM

4:15pm-5:30pm: JANE WILSON & BRADLEY BARNES

THURSDAY 10PM-11PM

THE CLEVER RUSE: VERMONT TRIBUTE TO PHISH

10PM-11PM: The Phish Brothers

FRIDAY 10PM-11PM

LAST KID PICKED

10PM-11PM: The Phish Brothers

SATURDAY 10PM-11PM

IN THE NAME OF CHRIS ROBINSON BROTHERHOOD

10PM-11PM: The Phish Brothers

SUNDAY 10PM-11PM

JAMIE LEE THURSTON

10PM-11PM: The Phish Brothers

MONDAY 10PM-11PM

DARK SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN

10PM-11PM: The Phish Brothers

TUESDAY 10PM-11PM

SOULE MONDE & TAUKE

10PM-11PM: The Phish Brothers

WEDNESDAY 10PM-11PM

BLUES FOR BREAKFAST

10PM-11PM: The Phish Brothers

THURSDAY 10PM-11PM

NORTHERNDOWN: THE ALMAN BROTHERS BAND

10PM-11PM: The Phish Brothers

FRIDAY 10PM-11PM

JUST ANNOUNCED

10PM-11PM: The Phish Brothers

SATURDAY 10PM-11PM

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music

CLUB DATES

NEARBY AVAILABLE: ALAN MALT

FRI 12 FEB

3 p.m. live: PULCHERHEAD & the Freshmen (Latterwood) 5 p.m., live
WARRIOR BAR (Live Express) (Judd) 8:30 p.m.

sat/son/sun/sun/sun

THE RED 5 BANDS (Avalanche) (Judd) 7 p.m. (live) (son)
4477777777 (Ship Captain) (Judd) 8 p.m. (son)
MODE 5 PLACE (Mud City Band) (Judd) 8 p.m. (son)
WARRIOR BAR (Live Express) (Judd) 8 p.m. (live) (son)
WARRIOR BAR (Live Express) (Judd) 8 p.m. (live) (son)

middlebury area

GRASS ROOTS (Live Express) (Judd) 8 p.m. (live) (son)

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SUN 15 / CHRIS ROBINSON BROTHERHOOD (JOCK)

CHRIS ROBINSON BROTHERHOOD

Family Matters Fans of the Black Crowes were understandably bemused when the band called it quits again, seemingly for good this time, in January. However, the Crowes' lead singer and co-founder, Chris Robinson, continues on with his own group, **CHRIS ROBINSON BROTHERHOOD** — a perhaps ironic name given the scrutiny between Robinson and his brother, Rich Robinson, that reportedly broke up the Crowes. In any event, Brotherhood's latest record, *Phosphorescent Harvest*, should rate as a classic Crowes disc. The songwriting is classic Chris Robinson, but it's shaded with an ethereal psych beat that cerebral aesthetes treasure late, too, where CBR are known to indulge in some seriously epic improvisational jams. Find out when they drop by the Rusty Nail in Stowe on Sunday, February 15.

mid-river valley/waterbury

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SUN 15 burlington

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REVIEW *this*

Will Patton Ensemble, Time's Arrow

(JONAS & LEMMON, CD, DIGITAL, BONA FIDE)

Embedded beneath the CD tray of Will Patton Ensemble's latest effort, *Time's Arrow*, is a curious and revealing quote: "Our love is like our music / It's here and there and it's gone." Baffling? Doesn't that willfully recognize that love from the 1940s-Jagger School exists? "No, it doesn't," says Patton. "Well, what the hell is the reason lyric-dancing in the three voices of a group never happens from Vermont?"

As to the album: *Time's Arrow* is thematically concerned with the passage of time, of eying the twilight on a banister we all occasionally watch. It's unlikely that headliner Will Patton is ready to retire — or swing, or chafe — off into that dark night just yet. But after more than 30 years performing internationally, it's natural that he'd at least ponder the idea. Indeed, *Time's Arrow* is defined by a palpable sense of nostalgia, wistful whyness and a delicate tinge of melancholy that suggests Patton is considering the importance of music, love and perhaps life itself. Like Mack says, "It's here and there it's gone."

If that all seems a little grandiose for a guitar-pop record, well, it's hard not to be seduced by the album's airy, winding cheer and rich passion. As always, whether on tenor and seven-string guitar or mandolin, Patton performs with heart emotion. The precision and grace of his technique are matched only by the personality with which he plays.

Longtime bandmates David Johnston, Clyde Sims and David Gussler connect their parts with winsome charm and ease. Offsetting the record feels less like a proper studio album than it does listening to while four old friends trade three-hours sets at a Vermont night club.

As was the case with WE's previous live album, *Time's Arrow* consists of Patton originals and well-placed covers. Speaking of covers, the record opens with "9200 Blues," a standard penned by Great Dane Groves's songbooker, Earl Warren. In lieu of a saxophone, Patton takes the lead on mandolin, his melody doled by his daughter, clarinetist Anna Patton. Drummer Gabe Jenson drops in as a guest, providing a breezy, swinging backdrop.

Next is "Mysticness," by famed French maelstrom composer Georges "Ar" From. Here Patton's mellow presence with Gussler's wistful strum is perfectly modulated. Following a lively take on Horace Silver's "Opus de Funk," we hear



the first of three Patton originals, "Swing for Mondays."

A remarkable quality of Patton's records is how well his own tunes fit alongside those by some famous composers. The bright, jaunty tone of "Swing for Mondays" help to frame what may be the record's centerpiece, a wistful and heartfelt rendition of Stephen Sondheim's "Birds" (featuring guest poet Michael Aronow). Even without the benefit of Patton's lyrics, Patton and co. evoke the desperation and hope of that iconic American ballad.

The remainder of *Time's Arrow* follows a similarly winding path. Whether an Americana waltz ("Lovers"), pretty love songs ("Sweet and Tender," "Early") or bopped-up jazz standards ("Lonesome Blues"), Patton proves his arrow has plenty of light left in it.

Time's Arrow by Will Patton Ensemble is available at cbsony.com.

DAVID BOLLER

Tsunamibots, Surfing Craze in the Robotic Age/ Rise of the Robots

(SELF-RELEASED CD, DIGITAL, DOWNLOAD)

For reasons that still remain unclear, surf music has experienced a minor revival in Vermont in the past 18 months or so. The latest band to drop into that surf-saturated scene were Tsunamibots, who recently released a pair of debut EPs, *Surfing Craze in the Robotic Age* and *Rise of the Robots*. However, are the vermonite Barbos, whose influences hail from Dick Dale's raucy southern California and spaghetti westerns, or the David Lynch meets Link Wray free preferred by the High Fives. Tsunamibots are primarily influenced by heavy code. The band's robotic affectations are a gimmick, but it's a damn good gimmick and makes for an entertaining, if super-groovy, listen of classic surf and punk.

Of the two EPs, *Rise of the Robots* has the most straight-ahead surf, sounding a



little like a lost Man or Astro-man record — or maybe a Computerized record if that band ever strayed from metal. Guitars Tsunamibots claims the cut on cars such as the title track and the cheerily "Start Creakin'." The Master Circuit (album) and the Man From (EP) make a formidable rhythm section. The duo lacks into consistent grooves throughout both discs, which make no sense because, y'know, they're robots. But they are the rare robots with a sense of humor as evidenced by the gaggle-inducing "Journey to the Center of Vermont." I guess even robots have to go through life's trials at some point.

Tsunamibots trace their lineage to the late, infamous local punk band Jack Jack.

That shared DNA, in code is evident on *Surfing Craze in the Robotic Age*. The EP opens on the title track, which delivers a bristling blend of punkability and surf punctuated by a few punning, robotic back — should we recorder, which "Anti-Human Interface" continues the aggressive, venturing between mugged punk bombast and sassy staccato surf-wave riffs. The snarling "Binary Beach" is a presumed homage to the campy 1964 Atlantic Records beach-blues flick *Beach, Beach, Beach*. The EP closes on "In the Belly of the Bot," a veritable mope of chunky surf rock that ends in a wash of glitchy digital noise.

As times a little more around the edges, Tsunamibots may not be the most technically gifted of Vermont's new-wave-surf bands — though they can certainly rock to that regard. But given their focus on style and unwavering commitment to their legitimately clever gimmick, they might just be the most fun.

Surfing Craze in the Robotic Age and *Rise of the Robots* are available at tsunamibots.com.

EMILY WILSON

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SLACK & POP

slawee/slagwags arena
THE BEES & BONES: Mountain Blue
Sucker Punch, 10 p.m. donation

MOJO & PLACE: John Wilson
(solo) mean time

SHUFFY HILL: Chris Coleman
Don't Stop Now, 10 p.m. \$10

northeast kingdom
THE STAGE: Open Mic, 10 p.m. free

MON.16

burlington

CLUB HEDONISTROUS: Metal
Monday: Whiskey One Blues
Brewery One Night: Swampy Hon
10 p.m. \$10-15+

HAUS OF MUSIC: Open Mic
Cape Melan, 10 p.m. free

HAUS OF MUSIC SPECIALTY:
Friday Night, 10:30 p.m. \$10

JP & P&B: Current Video: Empress
Night with Hedonist, 10 p.m. free

HAUS OF MUSIC: Open Mic
Cape Melan, 10 p.m. free

LIGHT CLAMP LAMP: Open
Mic, 10 p.m. \$10-15+

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Cape Melan, 10 p.m. free

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chilindenden county
ON TOP BAR & GRILL: Open Mic
with Kyle 10 p.m. free

slawee/slagwags arena
MOJO & PLACE: John Wilson
(solo) mean time 10 p.m. free

northeast kingdom
PHAT BATS TAVEN: Jay/John
Don't Stop, 10 p.m. free

TUE.17

burlington

CLUB HEDONISTROUS: Open Mic
with Kyle 10 p.m. free

HAUS OF MUSIC: Open Mic
Cape Melan, 10 p.m. free

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(solo) mean time 10 p.m. free

northeast kingdom
PHAT BATS TAVEN: Jay/John
Don't Stop, 10 p.m. free

WED.18

burlington

CLUB HEDONISTROUS: Open Mic
with Kyle 10 p.m. free

HAUS OF MUSIC: Open Mic
Cape Melan, 10 p.m. free

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Cape Melan, 10 p.m. free

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Cape Melan, 10 p.m. free



THE 10 (7) TOWN MOUNTAIN (BURLINGTON)

Feeling Blue Most popular modern bluegrass bands start, strictly speaking, bluegrass bands. Over the years, the genre has expanded to include gray varieties ranging from pop to punk to jazz and beyond. All that experimenting is wonderful and has ushered in an exciting age of string-based music. But there's still room for a bluegrass band that is, well, "just" a bluegrass band. Exhibit A: North Carolina's town bluegrass, a hot-potato group that takes its much pride in honoring the genre's traditions as other bands do in deconstructing them. Touring in support of a recent live album, Town Mountain play the Wilburys Festival in Burlington this Thursday, February 12.

David Swartz (Burlington) 10 p.m. free

MANIX/TOWN PIZZA & P&B: Open Mic with Andy Lopez, 10 p.m. free

MEETIN' N.Y. Comedy Club: Present a show with Andy Lopez, 10 p.m. free

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MEETIN' N.Y. Comedy Club: Present a show with Andy Lopez, 10 p.m. free

MEETIN' N.Y. Comedy Club: Present a show with Andy Lopez, 10 p.m. free

LOUNGE: Comedian/Storytelling
Burlington, 10 p.m. free

THE MONEY HOUSE: Open Mic
10 p.m. free

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PIZZERIA PIZZERIA & LOUNGE:
Burlington, 10 p.m. free

THE MONEY HOUSE: Open Mic
10 p.m. free

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Picasso Past and Present

"Staring Back: The Creation and Legacy of Picasso's *Demoiselles d'Avignon*," Fleming Museum of Art

One of the 20th century's most controversial and influential artworks is the centerpiece of a daring show at the University of Vermont's Fleming Museum of Art. "Staring Back: The Creation and Legacy of Picasso's *Demoiselles d'Avignon*" amounts to a bold repudiation on the part of curator and assistant director Jane Cohen — not least because that moment of modern art's earliest on display at the Fleming. "Les *Demoiselles d'Avignon*" has been enshrined at MoMA's Museum of Modern Art since 1939.

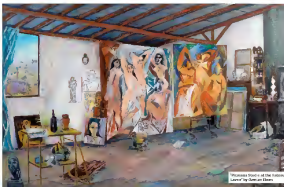
Inspired by the spell that prompted Picasso to paint his revolutionary masterpiece, Cohen opens convention in staging this high-tech homage. The multifaceted show is meant to suggest visitors with the

introductions, historical context and creative process that produced "*Demoiselles*" — and to demonstrate how the painting influenced artists who came after Picasso.

This is not the sort of static display that museums have long packaged for the public. Cohen goes all out with multimedia installations created by Jean Karon, a visual artist and lecturer in UVM's College of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences and Gabriela Bravetti, an assistant professor in the Kean College program at Champlain College. These not only offer partial compensation for the absence of Picasso's mysteriously missing left canvas, but work to place the viewer in the time, and even in the mind, of the artist in 1907.

Hand-controlled digital devices and explanatory blocks of text photos and reproductions swirl along the walls. An augmented-reality section includes an essay of Pish that offer views of all 700 of the artist's studies for the painting. An additional installation presents the cone and seahorse scenes Picasso would have based upon his Matisse-style studies in Paris. Another cycles through readings of scurrily critical comments made in response to "*Demoiselles*" when the artist first showed it to colleagues.

Visitors are expected to operate some of the devices — instructions are included. In so doing, they can browse through, or dwell on, words and images that Picasso scholar Cohen chase with the aim of imparting a nuanced appreciation of "*Demoiselles*" inspirations and inheritors.



Picasso's *Demoiselles d'Avignon* at the Fleming Museum of Art. Photo by Jane Cohen.

INSPIRED BY THE SPIRIT THAT PROMPTED PICASSO TO PAINT HIS REVOLUTIONARY MASTERPIECE, COHEN UPENDS CONVENTION IN STAGING THIS HIGH-TECH HOMAGE.

Some visitors may find the technology too much. Cohen does ask more of her audience than simply to wade through the exhibit. A few links encountered days before the official opening of "Staring Back" are likely to be smoothed out this week. Still, hands-on-survey viewers might spend more time fiddling with the controls than reading or seeing the digital resources.

Even without virtual reality there is plenty to see, and visitors will find relief from the intensity sections in the show's ample middle. Three pictures appear on walls with background text on adjacent panels, in adherence to canonical tradition. The pieces are responses to "*Demoiselles*" by nine contemporary artists. They weren't created explicitly for "Staring Back," but most were inspired by the 100th anniversary of Picasso's painting.

Most striking here is a set of photos by Leonore Raphael Agbodjola collectively titled "*Demoiselles de Paris-Novo*." At his studio in Paris-Novo, the capital of Benin, Agbodjola photographed bare-breasted African women whose faces are concealed by conventional masks similar to those worn by two of the five prostitutes depicted in Picasso's painting. The photos give a contemporary flip to the classical African masks that are among the myriad influences discernible in "*Les Demoiselles d'Avignon*." Agbodjola is also telling an European colonialist photo of naked African women, examples of which are among the more startling images included in "Staring Back."

The most controversial as well as the funniest of the contemporary pieces are three small, identical brooches by Belgian

artist Julien Brasseur. Each represents a woman seated on the floor with legs spread to reveal vagina dentata. Each figure also wears a "*Demoiselles*"-style African mask and gives the finger to viewers, thereby considerably upping up the defiant poses (the "staring back") of Picasso's subjects.

Gern Diers' "*Berlin*" conveys the same qualities. The New York artist engages in policy parable of the sometimes-mismanagement and often-leaving Picasso with her painting composed of multiple images of her in an old man — seated, standing, squatting,umping and always with duck dangling.

One of the most shocking aspects of this complex show is the four-part set of "demon" laid out in the room equipped with swirling texts and images.

The first theme, "The Chien," refers to the transmission of ideas and styles from artist to artist throughout the history of Western painting. Contemporaries and disciples grouped under this heading make clear that, despite its transitory appearance, "*Demoiselles*" owes much to centuries-old paintings by artists such as Titian, El Greco and Ingres. Cimarra, who died in 1906, was

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Megan J. Humphrey Valentine's Day gets a hell rep. But for Burlington artist Megan J. Humphrey, who specializes in creating artful greeting cards, February 14 is far from a Hallmark holiday. "To me, it's not just about couples being in love," she says. "Valentine's Day is the perfect time to spread the love around...it's just what the world needs." For several years, Humphrey has "spread the love" in the form of quirky collage art that even the biggest Valentine's Day detractors are sure to love. Initially inspired by lace-trimmed vintage Valentines, her cards have since shifted to include collages and photographs. "Surrounded by Love," a collection of Humphrey's work, is at Vintage Inspired Lifestyle Marketplace in Burlington through February 28. www.vintagelifestyle.com

STORMY/NOOD AREA (MARCH 10-17)

VERONA CHAIR/NOOD PROJECTIONS "Outside Inside: Concepts of Informal social gatherings that explore an intersection of energy, light and personal connection." Through February 28. Info: 508-283-2818. www.veronagallery.com

MOON RIVER VALLEY/SEVENTHURY

ART/MAISON/LOVE "Love Games" abstract images, several print runs by the same artist at all times. Info: 802-241-1554. www.moonrivervalley.com

BOB FRANK MOORE & VANDAN ROCHMAN "Collage, Drawing, Painting, Watercolor, Mixed Media and Sculpture." Through March 31. Info: 361-1010. www.bobfrankmoore.com

BOWEN BARNES "Traces of New York photographs, perspective, events, and traces on the wall and art." Through February 28. Info: 248-3608. www.bowenbarnes.com

WOODS IN THE VALLEY "Photos as a story, display 30 beautiful images in a variety of styles." Through March 28. Info: 888-6883. www.woodsvalley.com

MIDDLEBURY AREA

CLARK BARNES "Abstract, Impressionist, Photography." In the national exhibiting the Barnes art. Through April. Info: 361-1010. www.clarkbarnes.com

JOE BOLLE "Photo as a metaphorical, modern art." The Barnes art. Through February 28. Info: 361-1010. www.joebolle.com

JOE BARNES/PRINTS "Recent prints from the Joe Barnes Foundation." Through April 15. Info: 361-1010. www.joebarnes.com

CLARK BARNES "Abstract, Impressionist, Photography." In the national exhibiting the Barnes art. Through April 15. Info: 361-1010. www.clarkbarnes.com

PORTLAND AREA

BILL BARNES "An 11 Day 40, best photo exhibition of the Barnes art. Through April 15. Info: 361-1010. www.billbarnes.com

BARNES/PRINTS "Recent prints from the Joe Barnes Foundation." Through April 15. Info: 361-1010. www.joebarnes.com

SCAN THIS PAGE
WITH THE LIPAR APP
TO WATCH MOVIE TRAILERS.
SEE PAGE 10



Still Alice ★★★★★

One of the few links in this year's awards race is in the *Queen*. Best Actress category. Virtually nobody questions the inevitability of Julianne Moore going home with a little gold man as a result of her work in this film. She's won everything in her path so far, and for a very good reason, a very good performance.

Moore plays Alice Howland, a Columbia University linguistics professor celebrating her 50th birthday in the movie apogee. Her life initially sports an as good as it gets lustre. Her husband, John (Alan Rickman), is an equally driven research physician. The couple has three children: Tom (Hunter Parrish), a medical student; Anna (Kate

sweeth), who's pregnant with twins; and Lydia (Kristen Stewart), who's taking a stab at acting in L.A. They're so cultured and so modern: they could be the perfect family in one of Woody Allen's New York movies.

But they aren't. They're the not quite perfect family in a gesture written and directed by Walt Whitman and Richard Glatzer (pseudonym), based on Luis Gomez's 1980 novel. When Alice wakes John up in the middle of the night to tell him she's been forgetting words and becoming distant, seated on a cushion, and kisses the woman, he assumes her flumps aren't as dense as they seem. No matter what he'll be there, he says. As Alice's worries fade are confirmed the film flows a study in the way life goes on, the real-world caring family members can become distant in the face of illness.

and Africa could be tugging into Lifetime movie territory by being brutally honest about such matters. Allen wants John to take a year off so they can spend the most out of her months of disfigurement, but he's drawn to a distant professional opportunity and makes excuses. Two of her children haven't a clue how to help as the disease rolls them, with shocking swiftness, of the mother they've known. They shut down, sometimes themselves that their father knows how



when he makes arrangements with an isolated living facility.

Stewart's character has better instincts, but only marginally more success. In skits after a performance in New York, Lipkin picks up her mother's praise — only to realize that Alice thinks she's a young actress and a never met. The movie is filled with details and observations that anyone who's definitely not a

The most hair-raisingly suggestive aspect of all of course is Moore's transformation. She turns in a masterful performance, generally using little more than her face to suggest the ridiculous devastation that a taking place in *Blue Heaven*. I can't imagine how she did it, but the actress remains credible.

chaotic changes to the brightness in her eyes or the thickness of her mouth to convey the extinction of a person fighting to remain present and leaning ground by the hour. All the hair and makeup wizardry in the world couldn't produce that effect. What Minors achieves is an infinitely more visceral one.

(Indoor) *note: Still Alive begins its run at Merrill's Easy Cinema in Burlington on Friday, February 11. The 7 p.m. show on that day will be a 50% benefit for the Vermont chapter of the Alzheimer's Association.*

RICK KIDMAN

Jupiter Ascending ★★ ★

Ever since siblings Andy and Lisa Wachowski burst into the big time with *The Matrix* in 1999, fans have been waiting for them to concoct another science-fiction film "massive" enough to capture the public imagination. *Jupiter Ascending* is not that movie. Less stylistically cut than the dual-gender *Race*, less philosophically ambitious than *Cloud Atlas*, this timely collage of space-age tropes doesn't amount to much. But as February as it is, the film, first moving designed to the music of a "not much" consists of a series of odd time

The play might have been dreamt up by a bright 12-year-old girl who just watched *Charmers* of the Galaxy and David Lynch's *Dune* in rapid succession. With Keanu plays Jupiter Jones, a hard-drinking Russian immigrant whose name has a long and pointless history. He earnestly avoids life at scrubbing toilets and becoming an orphan due to the insistence of a lesbian cousin (interrupted by ... silence). They've come to kill her at the behest of a space tyrant (Kiefer Sutherland) who has identified Jupiter as the only person standing in the way of his legal possession of the Earth. And his plan for the

Happily for Jupiter, she's rescued by a poverty-stricken dog man who raps through the air in "groovy boots" and is played by a frequently starless Channing Tatum. Endowed with dogged (and double) loyalty,



he will continue to rescue me because every 15 minutes or so after he tips her off to an other planet, where Jupiter learns all about her crucial role in the feud of a pan-galactic dynasty.

The movie features so many royal machinations, it could be the plot for an SF rivaled "Game of Thrones." Along with all that plot, the Wachowskis offer exactly one idea, namely that millennia-old space tyrants might view our Earth precisely the way certain corporate CEOs on Earth do, as "a

sources to be converted into capital? These conversion methods are past, future and monetary.

It's not a bad concept for would-be progressive work but it's more of an afterthought than a central allegory. The main reason viewers might even notice the self-important subtext is that Bradshaw conceals it while wearing a collar like the queen in *Snow White* and mixing his voice with terrifying abruptness from an offstage trap to a shout. (I, for one, will remember that better.)

monologues longer and with more pressure than the whole's Otago estimated harm in The Theory of Everything). After that, Japan's determination to fight the power sort of just discourse is a faith of some life and death.

Jupiter ascending doesn't hit as crampy highs often enough, either. The *Washington Post* attempts to use tongue-in-cheek humor to lacerate their classmates' prior use of word-wrangling ("I love dogs," Jupiter glows, when her would-be boyfriend reminds her about his canine DNA). A nonsensical space-horror-murder sequence is pretty cool, but it comes across as a two-handed hamper to Jerry Gilliam's (and as a contributor to the story. In the end, Jupiter stands or falls on the basis of its animated action sequences and, while they're fun in a busy way, they're far from revolutionary.

Like Disney's John Carter, *Jupiter* is a better old-school space adventure than an original and box office drubbing might suggest. It offers as much solid, silly entertainment as a lesser *Mars* flick, and deserves to be beloved of 12-year-old girls everywhere. Maybe they've earned a turn, after so many action flicks catering to the fantasies of their male counterparts. But viewers who are already sick of their usual outcasts may find that *Jupiter Ascending* brings them down.

HAROLD HARRISON

REVIEWS

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Schedule not available at present time

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fun stuff

MORE FUN!

STRAIGHT DOPE (P.27),
CALCOKU & SUDOKU (PC-4),
& CROSSWORD (PC-5)

EDIE EVERETTE



MICHAEL DEFORGE



DAVE LAPP



LULU EIGHTBALL



Curses, Felled Again

Police looking for a hawk, robber in New Kensington, Pa., federal suspect Shane Landrey, 33, two black-way in a restaurant where he stopped for chicken and biscuits. Officers returned the restaurant hoping its surveillance video might show the suspect passing by early to spot Landrey eating at a booth. (Tuscarora Valley News Dispatch)

Tax Dollars at Work

The National Institutes of Health gave Donald Riosle \$1.4 million to develop an "irrigated condom," described as a non-reflex, silicone-based condom designed to "increase pleasure," but then canceled the project after a former employee accused Riosle of spending the funding on trips to Costa Rica, lunch parties at the Playboy Mansion, full-body plastic surgery, a condo in Provincetown, Mass., and parties for numerous get-rich-quick schemes. (Washington Post Feature)

Alaska taxpayers are funding a two-year, \$400,000 University of Alaska study aimed at combating fatal alcohol syndrome that involves making three progressive runs available in bar bathrooms. (Anchorage Dispatch News)

Kentucky spends \$2 million a year to pay 61 elected county judges who have no jobs to run. According to the Kentucky Center for Investigative Re-

porting, the figure includes nearly 100 full- and part-time deputies whom the judges employ, many of whom are family members. Several judges also work other jobs, a few of which are full time. (Lexington Herald Leader)

The U.S. government spent \$500,000

to build a police training facility in Afghanistan that disintegrated within four months of completion, according to the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction. His report said the contractor used substandard materials, installing bricks made only from sand, that caused water to become trapped between the walls, making the building look like it was "melting." Inspector General John Sopko called the project "an utter failure and embarrassment." (Fox News)

Self-Interest

Joe Morrissey, 55, in a Virginia legislature who also serving a jail sentence after being accused of having sex with a 17-year-old girl he heard as a roommate at his law office in Henrico County. He pleaded guilty to a lesser charge and now is on a work-release program that lets him spend days at the General Assembly while spending nights in jail.

When a bill to prohibit pornography in jail came up for a vote, Morrissey voted against the measure. It passed anyway. (Associated Press)

Pretty Good Eats

A Korean restaurant in central China began offering free meals to the 50 best-looking customers each day. The Agni Island restaurant in Zhengzhou asserts arrivals to a "beauty identification area" are given a panel of local plastic surgeons evaluates their faces, eyes, nose and mouth. Protesting fornicators are a perfect her advantage. City authorities accused the restaurant of damaging the city's image, but manager Xue Huan vowed the promotion would continue. (Britain's Telegraph)

Define "Life-Threatening"

After Facebook and Instagram service went down in San Francisco's East Bay area, five people called 911 to ask when the sites would be back online. "Even though Facebook is important to a lot of people, it's not a matter of life and death when it stops working," the dispatcher said after asking residents to stop calling to complain. "One other person called back to tell me I was being

made because I told her it wasn't a life-threatening emergency." (San Francisco's KQED-TV)

Authorities reassigned a \$11 operator in Anne Arundel County, Md., after he told a woman who called to report that her father had been hit by a car to "stop whining." After repeating his response to the caller's emotional plea for help, the dispatcher asked if there was anyone else at the scene he could talk to and later told her to "stop yelling." The victim died. Fire department Capt. James Davies acknowledged that the dispatcher might have handled the call differently but insisted dispatch time wasn't affected. (Baltimore Sun)

Getting Along

The Oneida Indian Nation announced plans to open a \$20 million casino in Chittenango, N.Y., honoring Arthur L. Frank Banta, who was born in the village and wrote *The Wounded Warrior of the Nation* also called for the "total assimilation" of Native Americans. Executive Chairman Hiram, a descendant of the 393 Seneca slaughtered at Wounded Knee, called the project a betrayal, asking in the *Native American Times*, "Would the Jews build a casino to honor Hitler?" (Washington Post)

JEN SORRGEN**HARRY BLISS**

FRAN KRAUSE

DEEP DARK FEARS



SOMETIMES I WEIGH MYSELF BEFORE BED.



THEN, THE VERY NEXT MORNING,



I FIND THAT I'VE GAINED A POUND.



THAT'S A LOT OF SPIDERS.

Have a deep, dark fear of your own? Submit it to cartoonist Fran Krause at deep-dark-fears.tumblr.com, and you may see your neurosis illustrated in these pages.

RED MEAT

THEY CALL ME "RED MEAT" BECAUSE OF THE NUMBER 666666

THEY CALL ME "RED MEAT" BECAUSE OF THE NUMBER 666666



THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW





Eva Sollberger's

STUCK IN VERMONT

...AND LOVIN' IT!

Watch at sevendayvmt.com

NEW THIS WEEK!



February 11, 2015
More than 1,000 brave souls braved the frigid winds of Lake Champlain tonight for tonight's annual Plunge. During our reports on the annual Plunge Plunge, Eva Sollberger was one of the plucky plungers.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT:



FEBRUARY 4, 2015
There's a former police officer who's decided to help out the community. He's named *Save Our Strays*. He's helped out about 100 dogs in the last year. He's named *Save Our Strays*. He's helped out about 100 dogs in the last year. He's named *Save Our Strays*. He's helped out about 100 dogs in the last year.



JANUARY 28, 2015
Eva Sollberger recently stopped on a job of her own. She's named *Save Our Strays*. He's helped out about 100 dogs in the last year. He's named *Save Our Strays*. He's helped out about 100 dogs in the last year.



JANUARY 21, 2015
Cortlandt, Nathan Lindsay, who's named *Save Our Strays*. He's helped out about 100 dogs in the last year. He's named *Save Our Strays*. He's helped out about 100 dogs in the last year.

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